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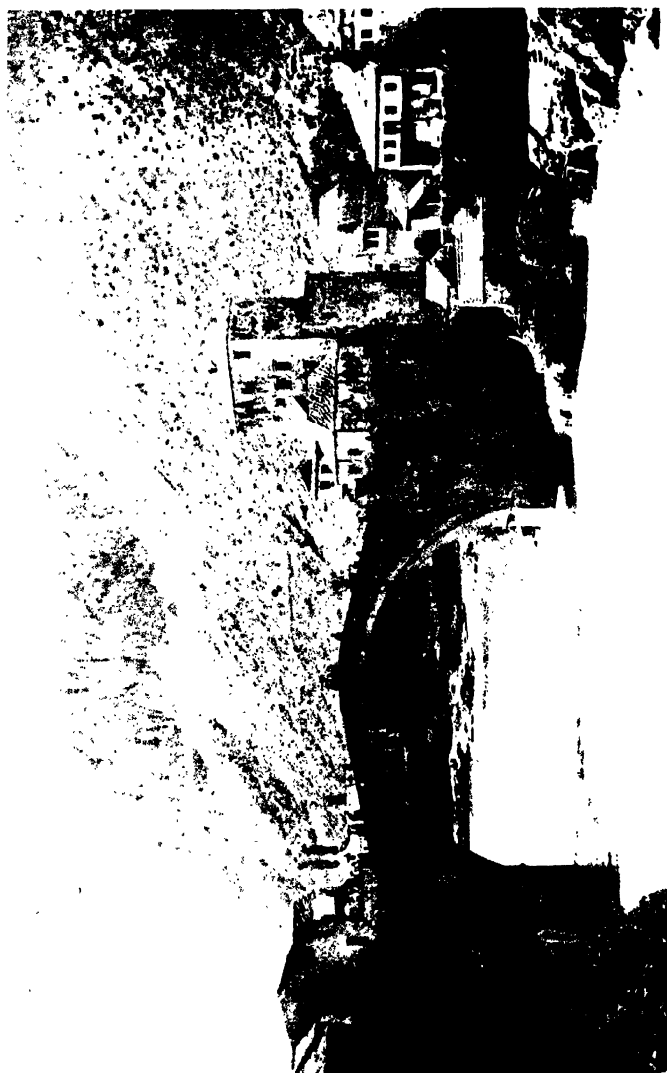
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THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS



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THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS

“GOD’S BLESSING ON THE ARCHITECTS WHO BUILD
THE BRIDGES O’ER SWIFT RIVERS AND ABYSSSES,
BEFORE IMPASSABLE TO HUMAN FEET.”

LONGFELLOW, *The Golden Legend*

A POPULAR REPORT OF THE BRITISH AND
FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR
MCMXXII-XXIII

THE BIBLE HOUSE, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON

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Except where otherwise stated, the incidents and statistics in this Popular Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society belong to last year's record. Here, it is possible to offer only a periscopic view of the main aspects of the Society's operations. For a more detailed account with full statistics the reader is referred to the Hundred and Nineteenth Annual Report, price One Shilling.

EDWIN W. SMITH,
Literary Superintendent.

THE BIBLE HOUSE, September 1923.

David Baran Inukey,
1 College Row, Calcutta.

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PROLOGUE

"The outstanding fact of the post-war position is this, that economic world-unity has actually arrived, while spiritual world-unity is not yet in sight. The nations are tied together by an economic interdependence which they cannot escape; they are kept apart by the absence of mutual sympathy."

THE DEAN OF BRISTOL.

WHEN the notorious Japanese criminal, Tokichi Ishii, received the New Testament in his prison cell at Tokyo he placed it unopened upon a shelf, and at first gave no heed to the lady missionaries whom afterwards he learned to regard as "the parents of my new life." But one day, "just for the sake of putting in the time," he took the book down and read until some words of Christ smote him. "I was stabbed to the heart as if pierced by a five-inch nail," he says. "By the power of that one word of Christ's, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*, my unspeakably hardened heart was changed, and I repented of all my crimes."

It is not so much upon this wonderful story that we wish to dwell here as upon the words of the Japanese prison official who urged Miss Macdonald to publish it in English.* "Much is said nowadays about the

* *A Gentleman in Prison*. Translated by Caroline Macdonald. 1923.

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difficulties of mutual understanding between the East and the West. Ideals are different, customs are different, the background of life and history is different, and we face an impasse. . . . And while this is being said, we have had in this very prison an example to the contrary. A man, uneducated, steeped in crime, condemned to death for murder, waiting daily for the unescapable end to which his crimes have brought him, is touched by one of another nation, and a woman at that, with traditions and history and education as different from his as night is from day ; but the universal message of the love of God flashes across the gulf of human differences and the man's soul responds. I want your people also to know this story, because it illustrates from real life, and beyond the shadow of doubting, the fact that underneath all the superficial differences that separate us, we are one in the depths of suffering and sorrowing and sinning and in the heights of love and sympathy and God."

The Gospel bridged the abyss which to man's dim vision might appear unbridgeable between this brutal Japanese criminal and the delicate English lady—between this sinner and his God.

* * * * *

When an English engineer applied for a concession to bridge the rivers of Morocco the Sultan peremptorily refused. "I cannot think of such a thing," he said ; "God created the world without bridges."

Strange as it may appear to the modern mind, the belief has prevailed in many parts of the world that just as men mark off the boundaries of their fields, so the Powers have placed seas and rivers to determine the bounds of the habitation of nations. To pass beyond such boundaries was looked upon as a tempting of

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Providence. To bridge a river was to interfere with Heaven's scheme of things. Some ancient peoples saw in each river the home of a god, others held the river to be itself divine ; in either case it was inviolable. Homer vividly describes the anger of the rivers of Troy when their waters were profaned by Achilles. It is a widespread notion that to pass above a person's head portends his death ; to pass over the head of a divine river or of a river-god was an impious crime. Moreover, to enable travellers to cross dry-shod over a river was to rob the river-god of the nourishment he would derive from the bodies of men and women who might in the absence of a bridge be drowned in the deep-eddying stream.

For these and other reasons, bridges appear comparatively late in history. We read of no bridge in the Bible. There is said to be no trace of a bridge in Greece before the Roman occupation. To this day, many tribes in Central Africa oppose the building of bridges on grounds that would have appeared eminently reasonable to ancient Greeks and Romans.

In every age adventurous men have braved all dangers, but as long as reverence endured for the old gods the social conscience would not allow them to build a bridge until they had appeased the wrath of the offended deity. They offered sacrifices to him—human sacrifices, it would seem—and in this way paid a toll on the lives saved by means of the bridge.

Ancus Martius built the earliest bridge over the Tiber in the seventh century B.C.—the Pons Sublicius so bravely kept by Horatius. Following a secular custom, the Romans went once a year in procession to this bridge and the Vestals threw into the river a number of puppets shaped of rushes in the form of men bound hand and foot. Many scholars believe

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that these puppets took the place of human victims which at an earlier date were offered annually to placate Father Tiber for the violation of his sacred rights by the building of the bridge. Human sacrifices in connexion with bridges have prevailed in some other countries. Tradition tells us, for example, that the stones of Old London Bridge were besprinkled with the blood of little children.

When the river-gods had been pacified the ancient bridge became a sacred object. At Rome the priest who offered the preliminary sacrifice acted also as the architect. The maintenance of bridges was entrusted to the colleges of pontifices, at whose head stood the Pontifex Maximus. In course of time this title was assumed by the emperors themselves. When the Galilean had conquered, seven Christian emperors in turn bore the name and enjoyed the prerogatives of Chief Bridge-builder. The title then passed to the Bishops of Rome, though it was not exclusively theirs until the eleventh century; since that time Pontifex Maximus has been a title of the Pope.

During the Middle Ages the building and maintenance of bridges was regarded as a work of religion. The chapels still found upon many of these old structures serve to remind us of the piety of the medieval builders.

* * * * *

This old history is rich in symbolical meaning for one who conceives the Bible Society as a Bridge-builder. Men have called in religion to overcome the obstacles which hinder the free fellowship of peoples. They have also sought in religion the means of bridging the gulf between heaven and earth.

When the ancients looked upwards they saw in the rainbow a symbol of their hopes. This arch spanning

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earth and sky is the oldest of all bridges. The pious Hebrew looked upon it as the pledge of God's goodwill towards men for perpetual generations. In the imagination of the Greeks it stood for what the ladder set up in his dream meant for Jacob; by it the messengers of the gods, and the gods themselves, descended and ascended. Angels and gods might pass over that bridge, but it was the inveterate conviction of the ancients that for men to do so was the most desperate of all enterprises.

The Persian nature-worshippers pictured the Bridge of Doom stretching between heaven and earth; its passage was an adventure only to be attempted by men of the extremest vigour and agility. In Zarathushtra's system this athletic test became a moral judgment: *Cinvato Peretu*, "the Bridge of the Separator" spanning the abyss of hell, broadened into a causeway, nine spears' or twenty arrows' length across, when the righteous passed; it shrank to a razor edge for the wicked, so that they fell into the bottomless pit below.

In the Mohammedan eschatology the Bridge is named Al-Sirat. The righteous pass over like a flash of lightning; other people may take 25,000 years to cross. Scandinavian mythology also speaks of the dread river to be passed at last. A bridge plated with shining gold led over it to Hel—one of the nine underworlds—and from there the soul traversed the tremulous aerial bridge Bifrost to Asgard, the home of the gods.

"It's a long way to God," is the sad refrain of a song that many pagan Africans sing. "It's a long way to God."

* * * * *

The religion of Jesus Christ refuses to postulate impassable gulfs separating man from man and mankind from God. Our Lord came to bridge the chasms which

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stand in the way of free uninterrupted fellowship between the Father in heaven and His family on earth, and between the several members of that family.

In the discourses of Christ, and in the writings of those who stood nearest to Him, the word "one" rings like a solemn refrain. The human race is fissured in every direction; but in God's mind it is a unity: "He hath made of one blood every race of man." Christ's Church is fissured to-day, but He saw it as a unity: "one flock and one Shepherd." And listen to St. Paul: "We who are many are one bread, one body, for we all partake of the one bread. . . . In one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one spirit"; in the Church "there can be neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

On the lofty Andes which form the dividing line between Chile and Argentina stands an imposing statue of Christ, erected to commemorate the peaceful settlement of the boundary dispute between the two peoples. And upon the pedestal these words are engraved: "He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition." This is the reconciliation that the world needs supremely to-day—the At-one-ment which Christ alone can bring to pass. Reconciling men with God, He reconciles them to each other. He is the one divine Pontifex Maximus—Himself both the Bridge and the Chief Bridge-builder; and all who labour at bridging a way between peoples are His fellow-workers.

* * * * *

The greatest problem that alllicts the minds of thinking men to-day is how to bring individuals, classes,

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communities, nations, races, into closer fellowship. As a recent writer has truly said: "The great war has turned bridges into chasms"; in other words, peoples are now more disunited than ever. Europe has been Balkanized. The tyranny of the frontier was never so tyrannical as it is to-day. The deadly nightshade of hate and prejudice spreads and flourishes mightily in the soil ploughed by war and watered by the blood of millions.

Beyond Europe the old chasms remain unbridged. Some of them are named Race, Colour, Creed. The gulfs that separate men spiritually are more conspicuous when contrasted with the material ties that bind them together. Nations are becoming more and more interdependent economically. In the world of to-day you cannot harm your enemy without harming yourself. The Englishman's breakfast-table tells him every morning how dependent he is for his food upon the labour of aliens whose face he will never see, whose names he will never know. If the first need of civilization and peace is, as Adam Smith said, quick and cheap intercourse, then we have attained it. When Stanley found Livingstone at Ujiji the letters he carried were two years old. That was the distance between London and Lake Tanganyika in 1872; to the wireless telegraphist the distance to-day is one-twentieth of a second.*

"Men talk to-day o'er the waste of the ultimate slime,
And a new word runs between: whispering, 'Let us be one!'"

The deep-sea cables do bear that message, but too often are used by Alecto, "whose heart is set on gloomy wars, passions, plots and baneful crimes," æ

* *The World-wide Upheaval of the Races.* By Basil Mathews, page 4.

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her instrument, together with the printing-press, for stirring up suspicion and strife. By obliterating space, modern science has complicated, and not solved, our problem. Men travel and intermingle, but this closer contact sometimes breeds contempt where distance lent enchantment. Culture spreads and perhaps more than anything except religion brings a sense of unity among those who share in it; but it is confined to the few, and too often acts as heady wine to light and unaccustomed heads. Men may be intoxicated by reading the splendid pages of Milton and Burke and Mill, but this does not of itself make for brotherhood. The world has become a medley—not a unity.

The League of Nations is the latest attempt to achieve a measure of co-operation among the nations in the direction of peace. The League is more—thank God!—than “the faded ghost of a great hope.” But even were it completely representative and loyally and wholeheartedly supported by all the nations which set it up, it would still lack something. It is a valuable piece of machinery, and like all machinery—as its best friends know—needs a tremendous driving force behind it.

What the world really needs is a new heart, a new spirit. The real problem of to-day is a problem of the inner life,—how to attain to a common conscience, a oneness of soul, an identity of sentiment as to the highest things. As Lord Milner has well expressed it:

“Unless nations think and feel alike on some fundamental questions of morality, the frantic excesses of nationalism will end by leading them to tear one another in pieces. . . . You cannot trust to material progress as a sufficient harmonizing force. Faith in that road of salvation was a delusion of the middle of last century. Seventy years of discord and bloodshed almost unparalleled in history have given those hopes the lie. Moral approximation alone can control the elemental

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passions that engender antagonisms between races or mitigate the fierceness of their conflict."

To appreciate the meaning of Lord Milner's solemn admonition it is sufficient to read such a passage as the following, taken from the *Minhaj et Talibin*. That this official textbook of Mohammedan law is printed in English only serves to emphasize the incompatibility of its teaching with British ideas :

" In a war against infidels it is forbidden to kill minors, lunatics, women . . . ; but one may lawfully kill monks, mercenaries in the service of the infidels, old men, persons that are weak, blind, or sickly, even though they have taken no part in the fighting, nor given information to the enemy. If they are not killed, they must at any rate be reduced to slavery. The wives of infidels should also be reduced to slavery. . . ."

As a flash of lightning on a dark night may reveal a chasm yawning across the traveller's path, so does such a passage reveal the gulfs that separate men in sentiment and practice. More alarming than any political or economic confusion is the anarchy of ethical values in the world.

* * * * *

To bring about the moral unity of mankind something is necessary that shall touch the springs of conduct. If that transforming power be not in religion, it is nowhere. Religion in some of its shapes has been, and still is, a divisive force. If it is to provide the bond of union, it must be grounded upon the eternal fact that God is Father and that all men are His children. It is because Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of those verities that He is the Reconciler. As men come to God through Him, and through Him realize their common brotherhood, so, and not otherwise, will peace come to this earth.

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This does not mean that the ecclesiastical and other systems that have grown up in Europe will necessarily be found adaptable to all races; nor does it mean that all natural diversities of temperament are to be planed away into one humdrum level. But it does mean that all men are to be gathered into one sacred fellowship and to find their bond of union in devotion to Him who is *the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.*

As we think of that One Holy Church which is to be on earth what it is eternally in the mind of God, we have to lament the schisms which now weaken the witness of Christianity. Those divisions poison the world atmosphere more than most of us realize. The achievement of a unity of spirit within the Church of Christ is the most clamant of all clamant demands. If Christians cannot be united among themselves, how can they convincingly preach peace and goodwill to the nations? They possess the secret of unity if they will but use it. In the measure that they are loyal to Christ and to the things for which He supremely cares will their unity be realized.

* * * * *

In despondent moments we are tempted to despair of the fulfilment of our dreams. It seems unthinkable that ever the Kingdom of God should be established in the hearts of all men—as unthinkable as the bridging of a great ravine must appear to an ignorant savage. Take the following true story as an allegory.*

When Cecil Rhodes planned to throw an arch over the Zambezi immediately below the Victoria Falls,

* *The Witch Doctor, and Other Rhodesian Studies.* By F. Worthington.

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the old native chief who owned the surrounding country readily gave permission but utterly refused to believe in the feasibility of the scheme. He argued from the things he saw.

"When a man builds a small hut, is a pole from the ground to the roof necessary?"

"No," replied his people to whom he addressed the question.

"If a man builds a hut as high as heaven, is not a pole necessary?"

"Yes," "Yes," "Yes," they chorused.

"See these white men who build a bridge across the thundering smoke. Does it not require a pole to hold up the roof of the bridge?"

In spite of all his doubts the work advanced. The thin steel arms flung out from either bank crept daily towards the clasping of hands . . . and yet the bridge did not fall. The old chief stood on a rock above the chasm and watched day by day, and every evening he said to his people: "It cannot be done."

With the dropping into place of the last girders the mighty arch was finally completed. "It cannot stand—there is no support," the old chief said that night. When the first train crossed the bridge, he was standing, a pathetic figure, alone upon his rock. He perhaps realized that day that there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in his philosophy.

"Only stupid people sneer at the man who says *Credo quia impossibile*. To have faith in the impossible is precisely the function of religion."

* * * *

To the Church is entrusted the ministry of reconciliation that she may beseech men on behalf of Christ: Be ye reconciled to God! Be ye reconciled one to

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another! It is the Bible Society's high privilege to be the handmaid of the Church in this ministry. By fulfilling its particular function of translating, printing and distributing the Holy Scriptures the Society is doing its part in spreading the Gospel which shall bind man to man, and man to God. To compare this work with the building of a bridge is to use no idle metaphor.

The following pages will tell of the progress of the Bridge.



Photo by

Donald McLeish.

CAIRO FROM THE MOHATTAM HILL, WITH THE CITADEL,
CROWNED BY THE ALABASTER MOSQUE, IN THE FOREGROUND.

From Port Said last year the Bible Society circulated 91,000

THE PILE-DRIVERS

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*"Keep ye the Law—be swift in all obedience—
Clear the land of evil, drive the road and bridge the ford.
Make ye sure to each his own
That he reap where he hath sown ;
By the peace among our peoples let men know we serve the
Lord!"*

RUDYARD KIPLING, "A Song of the English."

AN eminent engineer has reminded us that bridges do not rise ready-made like Venus from the froth of the sea. The most important, as it is often the most difficult, part of building them consists in securing a sound foundation. They must be based upon the living rock, or upon a sure artificial support. The famous Rialto bridge at Venice has stood firm for four hundred years upon twelve thousand wooden piles driven deep into the shifting sands.

The longest bridge in the Southern Hemisphere stretches across the estuary of the Hawkesbury River, New South Wales, which is four times the width of the Thames at London. Its seven spans of steel-framed girders, each 410 feet long, rest on piers of stone which themselves rest on concrete piles. Forty feet of water and 122 feet of soft mud had to be passed through before a hard bottom was found ; in one place rock was reached only at 162 feet down. Huge steel cylinders (or caissons, as they are called), built on shore in sections,

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were floated to the site, let down through the water and mud and filled with concrete. To ensure their being in exact position and perfectly vertical, the most intricate calculations and the most meticulous care were necessary. After all the massive pillars had been erected, the engineers spent many anxious and strenuous months in placing the great girders in position. There the bridge stands to-day, a thing of beauty and strength. What is visible to the spectator, vast as that is, is only about one half the entire structure; the remainder is sunk out of sight beneath the stream.

How many people think of all this when they cross the bridge? How many ever bestow a thought upon the mathematical research required in designing the form and dimensions of the spider-like structure, upon the three years of hard work and anxiety spent in its erection? A bridge is passed over in a few minutes, and there is an end of it to the average traveller. Not one passenger in a hundred thousand knows the names of the bridge-builders.*

“To be Speeded with Maturitie.”

How many of us could repeat the names of the scholars who produced the Revised Version of our English Bible? Few of us, perhaps, ever think of their patient labours extending over ten years on the New Testament, and fourteen on the old. Still fewer call to mind the Forty-seven who gave us the Authorised Version of 1611. “The worke,” they say in their preface, “hath not bene hudled vp in 72 dayes, but hath cost the workemen, as light as it seemeth, the paines of twise seuen times seuentie two dayes and more; matters of such weight and consequence are to be speeded with maturitie: for in a businesse of moment a man feareth

* *The Adventures of a Civil Engineer.* By C. O. Burge. 1909.

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not the blame of convenient slackness." And behind those men were Taverner and Matthew and Coverdale and Tyndale and Wycliffe, and the host of known and unknown writers who forged and tempered our English tongue. These drove the piles of the Bridge which is a symbol of the union of all who speak the tongue that Shakespeare spake—the Bridge over which millions of men have come to God.

What shall be said of the 770 versions in other tongues, 558 of which the British and Foreign Bible Society has helped to publish or circulate? Who can measure the amount of consecrated toil that this figure represents on the part of scholars, few of whom are known by name beyond a narrow circle? These men—to use Dr. Hope Moulton's words—pass away without any taste of the world's rewards, content if they can but take the humblest part in the work of bringing an everlasting Gospel to the lowest of mankind.

Why Translate?

Last April, at the Bristol meeting of the Classical Association, the President, Professor J. W. Mackail, said many things concerning the masterpieces of Greek and Latin literature which we hold to be true of the Bible, the greatest of classics. He spoke of them as having not only a stimulating but a steadying, not only a kindling but an illuminating power; by losing touch with them, he affirmed, we cut ourselves off from the sources of our civilization, the anchorage of our spirits, the sap of our life. "But," he went on to say, "the contact must be direct. . . . When the classic is not in the mother-tongue, its place cannot be taken, its vital power cannot be communicated, by a translation."

Whatever may be true of the Latin and Greek classics,

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this is not true of the Holy Scriptures. The records of the Bible Society prove that God speaks to Quechua Indians, to African Bantu, to South Sea Islanders, to Arabs and Indians and Chinese, as well as to Europeans, through the Scriptures in translated form. No one will seriously contend that English people must learn Hebrew and Greek before they can profit by the Bible, nor that missionaries must teach those languages to savage tribes, who equally with ourselves are God's children and have the same inalienable right to know their Father's love and will. Out of every 1,000 men who read the Bible, 999 must perforce read it in a translation. It is the Bible Society's business to see that they have it in as perfect a form as human skill can make it.

New Versions.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has but one object—to provide God's Word for every man in his own tongue. The languages in which it has helped to publish or circulate the Scriptures now number 558. This total includes the complete Bible in 136 languages, and the New Testament in 130 more. Since the beginning of this century no fewer than 180 forms of speech have been added to the list. EIGHT of these have been added since our last Report :

(1) *Lur* is a Nilotic tongue spoken by a quarter of a million people living on the western side of the Albert Nyarza in Belgian Congo. The tribe is being evangelized by the Africa Inland Mission, which has seven stations and about fifty outposts in the area. The translation of St. John now printed was made by Mr. James O. Averill of that mission.

(2) In Tanganyika Territory, among the Pare mountains, south-east of the Victoria Nyanza, live the Wapare, a Bantu tribe numbering about 50,000. Into their language, which

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is called *Asu*, the New Testament has been translated by workers of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission, the chief translator being Mr. E. Kotz. Having satisfied ourselves that the version was carefully made in accordance with the Bible Society's "Rules for the Guidance of Translators," we have now printed this New Testament.

(3) *Tonga of Zambezi* is another Bantu language spoken by some 100,000 tribesmen in Northern Rhodesia within the angle between the Zambezi and Kafue rivers. The Book of Genesis now published by the B.F.B.S. has been translated by the Rev. J. R. Fell, Principal of the Primitive Methodist Training Institute at Kafue, who had already issued privately his version of St. Mark's Gospel.

(4) *Bambara* is a Sudanese language spoken in the French Sudan around Bamako, Upper Senegal. The translation of St. Luke's Gospel was originally prepared in his own tongue by a convert named Samuel Vauvert. This was revised by Mr. G. C. Reed, of the Kansas Gospel Missionary Union, assisted by colleagues and natives, and has now been published by us.

(5) *Luba* is the name of a very widespread language spoken by Bantu tribes in Central Africa. Translations in three of its dialects had already been published by our Society; to these must now be added St. Mark in the *Kaonde* dialect, spoken by about 40,000 people in the south-east corner of Belgian Congo and in Northern Rhodesia. This version has been made by the Rev. C. S. Forster, of the South Africa General Mission, with the help of Kaonde assistants.

(6) Some years ago our Society published the New Testament in the *Hwa* dialect of *Miao*, spoken in the N.E. of the province of Yunnan, in Western China. We have now published St. Mark in the *Chuan* dialect of *Miao*, which differs considerably from the *Hwa* dialect. Several native Christians assisted the Rev. H. Parsons, of the United Methodist Church, in this translation. The Gospel is printed in a phonetic script.

(7) *Quechua-Huanuco* is the dialect of the Quechua language spoken in the province of Huanuco in the interior of Peru. Mr. T. Webster Smith, of the Evangelical Union of South America, assisted by Señor Lazaro Chocano, has translated the four Gospels into this dialect, and our Society, in conjunction with the American Bible Society, has pub-

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lished them with the vernacular and Spanish texts in parallel columns. This is the fourth form of Quechua represented in our list.

(8) In addition to these we must also include *Arawak*, spoken in British and Dutch Guiana, since our Society has circulated copies of the book of Acts published in this language by the American Bible Society.

The bringing out of versions of single books of Scripture in fresh languages by no means exhausts the Bible Society's task. The completion of the Bible, or at least of the New Testament, is aimed at in many mission fields. The Society has this year published the entire New Testament in four languages where formerly it had only issued portions—*Taita-Dabida* in Kenya Colony, *Duala* in Cameroon, *Houailou* in French Caledonia, and *Mwala-Mulu* in the Solomon Islands. Translators are engaged in completing the New Testament in nine other forms of speech. In one language—*Gu*, spoken in the south of Dahomey, West Africa—the Bible has now been completed by the Rev. G. O. Henry, himself a Christian Dahomey pastor born at Porto Novo. And in three other languages—*Fanti* dialect of *Ashanti*, *Luna-Inkongo*, and *Ronga*—the whole Bible is nearing completion.

Down to Bed-rock.

Those who have never lived in a social atmosphere where reading and writing are unknown arts must find it impossible to realize what it means to a people to have the first printed book in their language. It is the opening of a new world to them. And the enterprise of the missionary ensures, with the help of the Bible Society, that almost always their first book, other than a primer, is some part of the best Book. One can enter into the feelings of the Rev. R. T. Worthington, whose translation of St. Mark into the Meru tongue was published by our Society in 1921, when he wrote: "I count it one of the most joyous experiences that can come to a man to have been privileged to translate a portion of the New Testament into a new tongue."

THE PILE-DRIVERS

Shortly before Principal Denney died, Mr. Frater, an old student of his, called on him to show him a copy of a large part of the New Testament which he had translated into *Paama*, one of the many dialects of the New Hebrides, and to obtain his counsel on some matters connected with the translation. Principal Denney reverently took the manuscript into his hands, quietly handed it back to Mr. Frater without making any suggestion, and, with tears in his eyes, said: "I would give my whole life-work, both as minister and professor, to have done that."

The Sub-structure of the Bridge.

But think again of all that this work means, the long years of toil before any part of the structure appears above the surface. Here is one translator's experience.

After a long journey from the coast, he was met at a certain point in Central Africa by a company of two hundred men who had come down to carry his goods and chattels (and his wife) to the newly-founded mission farther north. At that time the language of these men had never been reduced to written form; they possessed no alphabet, no grammar. As he had a fortnight's tramp before him, the missionary thought it would be an excellent opportunity to learn something of this strange tongue, and fortunately he found among the carriers one man who knew a few words of a kindred African speech which he himself had already mastered. This man became his first teacher. When they rested during the middle of the first day's march, scholar and teacher sat apart from the others and the missionary wrote down the names of some surrounding objects and a few verbs. Next day he found his teacher recalcitrant. "Sir," he said, "how can I teach you my language, when my stomach is empty and my teeth are clean?" He meant that he was hungry. The missionary, who had seen him eating a hearty meal of several pounds of meat, knew that the excuse was baseless. The first lessons came to an abrupt end, but not before he had learnt some words and had acquired that most useful phrase, *Chinzhi chechi*?—What is this? With that question he pestered everybody, pointing to this thing and that, and handling one object after another. That was the first step; a Grammar

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and Dictionary followed six years later, and the final step twelve years after the first, when the whole of the New Testament (part of it translated by a colleague) was published by the Bible Society in the Ila language.

We pass over the trials endured by this missionary in accumulating a vocabulary of 10,000 words, and all the ludicrous situations into which his mistakes led him. But what about the grammar? Africans speak their language very correctly, but know nothing of grammatical rules. At first one might think that the native speech was chaotic, but further study reveals its construction to be beautifully regular. Nor is it simple. Ila divides the noun into 13 classes, each with its own proper particles, and these number about 400. The verb has five moods, 17 voices or species, and some 60 tenses. All this had to be discovered by analysis. The missionary began by inducing a native to repeat slowly some of the folk-tales so common among Africans. He did his best to write them down, and as the sentence, not the word, is the unit of speech, his notes took this form:

*Mombashakawilitivuminavuminawezomombakuchisokochakæe-
kadinachisekwekakalaumenzhikadyamakweyobubonabudyana-
chisekwekakwechelauzebubonambuakwechelanaachisekwe.*

A seemingly hopeless concatenation of syllables! Such was the quarry out of which the grammar was hewn! Out of pages upon pages of such material the nouns and verbs, pronouns and particles, had to be patiently dissected, and the proper relations determined between one word and another. It was then possible to rewrite the passages with the words separated. The above passage, translated into English, reads: "Hornbill, he-who-is-intensely-black, the-constant-giver-of-assent [these are praise-giving titles], was in origin a wild goose; he lived in the water and ate water-lilies just as a goose does, and quacked just as a goose quacks."

Let the reader who is learning French try an experiment. Let him get a Frenchman to dictate some stories and after he has filled a note-book, let him attempt to make his own French grammar out of what he has written. He will then be able to sympathize better with the missionary linguist—the pile-driver of the Gospel bridge.

The task is still further complicated when there are difficult

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sounds in the language—things like the Zulu clicks, for example, which sound like the popping of corks. Ila has no such harsh sounds, but, like many other languages, it relies to some extent upon “tones” to differentiate the meanings of words that otherwise would sound, and when written would appear, alike. We all know that we can say the English word “yes” in several ways with different meanings; according to the tone, or musical accent, it may express assent, or it may ask, “What do you want?” or say “There you are!” or it can show doubt and hesitation. In Chinese *chu* may mean “pig,” “master, God,” “bamboo,” or “to dwell,” according to the tone; and it certainly would be awkward for a missionary to pronounce the word *chu* wrongly. In the same language there are 69 words all having the form *i*; and thirty-eight of them are pronounced with the same tone, so that in the spoken language there is nothing to distinguish them. In the Yoruba language of West Africa—in which our Society has published the whole Bible—the word *abo* may, according to the way it is pronounced, mean “a bag to keep clothes in,” “female,” “a kind of tree,” “half,” “returning,” “one who adores.”

Trials of the Translator.

Assuming that the missionary has now learnt the language and is ready to embark upon translating one of the Gospels, he has by no means exhausted his difficulties.

First of all, is the translation to be baldly literal—a “transverbation,” rendering the original almost word for word—or, as certain eminent translators have held, is the literary pleasure of the readers to be the main consideration? To show the possibilities, let us take two lines from the Agamemnon of Æschylus. Professor Gilbert Murray’s rendering is this:—

“Glad-voiced, the old saw telleth, comes this morn,
The Star-child of a dancing midnight born.”

Here is Mr. Trevelyan’s version:—

“With happy tidings, so the proverb runs,
May the dawn issue from her mother night.”

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While Robert Browning "transverbates" in this fashion:—

"Good-news-announcer, may—as is the byword—
Morn become, truly, news from Night his mother."

On this question the Bible Society, as a result of over a century's experience, recommends the following wise rule to translators of the Scriptures:—

"The Committee wish their versions to be faithful translations, in a style easily understood by the people; on the one hand avoiding vulgarisms and colloquial expressions unworthy of the Book, and on the other hand avoiding forms of speech which are classical rather than intelligible to ordinary readers. It is not the object of the Society to produce versions in a language as it should be, but in a language as it is. The simplest and best known words should be used in the idiomatic forms of the living tongue, and paraphrase should be avoided as far as practicable. Every version should be as literal as the idiom of the language will permit."

A translator soon becomes aware that Greek and Hebrew idioms are often very different from those of the language with which he is dealing. For example, in the verse "For this people's heart is waxed gross . . ." the Greek word for "waxed gross" means literally "grown fat." The equivalent Ila words are *mozo waba muinu*, but that would mean "the heart has become sweet," which is not what the prophet meant to say. In such passages the sense has to be taken and the proper native idiom found—you cannot translate word for word. Some African idioms strike an Englishman as very curious; for example, in Ila our Lord's words "Be of good cheer," must be rendered "Make your hearts hard (firm, or dry)."

Under the most propitious circumstances translation is never easy work. Glaring instances of mistranslation serve as a perpetual warning. A book of detachable picture post-cards of the Little Trianon at Versailles—where Queen Marie Antoinette and her ladies played at farming—contained an introduction in French and English. This was the French

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version : " Pour se divertir à jouer à la fermière elle fit élever un hameau en miniature, d'un grâce un peu maniérée où la tourmente révolutionnaire la surprit et l'enleva à jamais." This sentence was rendered as follows : " To take one pleasure of diversion she amused her self at the farmer wife a miniature hamlet been raise up with grace and affected wich the disturbance revolutionist surprised her and swept her for ever."

Upon this, *Punch* (in whose pages this gem appeared) remarked : " Among the things that one has never understood is the unwillingness of foreigners who are preparing documents in English to ask any assistance from English residents."

Now what safeguards a translation of the Scriptures is the fact that natives of the country are enlisted in the work. No missionary, however great a mastery he had obtained of the language—and many missionaries are regarded by the people themselves as experts in it—would embark upon translation without native guidance.

The Rev. R. T. Worthington, who, during ten years' residence among the Meru tribe of East Africa, reduced their language to writing and afterwards translated St. Mark, has described his method, and it is the usual one. The first draft took some eighteen months to complete, so carefully did he proceed ; finally he and his native assistants worked through the Gospel together.

" Then came the great days of revision, with their long arguments as to whether this word or that was more suitable to convey the thought of the Gospel. Those days also had a quality of their own, given by the feeling that a more intimate knowledge of the Good News was being thus gained and given. And can you enter into my feeling about this, that here were black people, only recently pagan, engaged in loving discussion of the Word, which of all we had brought them was the most precious ? How tenderly, how diligently, they sought the right term, until the work was complete ! And what thrills, as some new and unexpected meaning was discovered ! "

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Missionary versions are not library products. The translator is all the while expounding the Gospel in the living tongue and leading his people into Christian experience. The only way to understand an idea is to live through an experience; and as young converts come to repentance, forgiveness and other experimental truths, they grow into an understanding of the missionary's teaching and are able to discover, adapt or invent terms to match their experience. At first he must needs try to explain in words—afterwards they express what they themselves feel. The Bible then becomes profoundly theirs—something identified with their inmost life—to a degree that we can hardly appreciate. This is naturally a slow process. More and more, as the native Christians grow in knowledge and experience, will they take their share in translating and perfecting the Scriptures in their mother-tongue. An African Christian has recently completed the Bible in the Alada dialect of Gu, and this is an earnest of things to come. The early versions merge into later and more perfect ones, the first translators go to their eternal reward, their names and labours pass into oblivion—but the Bridge goes on building!

Revision.

The Bible Society spares neither pains nor money to ensure that versions of the Scriptures shall be as perfect as they can be made. No version, however, is absolutely perfect—not even our English versions. Bishop Westcott used to say, “An imperfect translation is better than none”; but we can never be satisfied with less than the best. When revision is found to be necessary, the Bible Society brings together scholars of various denominations and races for the purpose. Committees are engaged on no fewer than eleven such revisions at the present time. Native scholars who are expert in their own mother-tongue are taking an increasing share in this important work. One of them, the Rev. Joel

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Waiz Lall, holds the responsible post of chief reviser of the Bible in Urdu, which is the lingua franca of about 70 millions of people in India.

Towards Unity.

As far as lies in its power the Bible Society endeavours to ensure that in any one language area there shall be one version of the Bible—a version that can in no sense be termed an Episcopalian or Independent or Presbyterian Bible, but one common to all sections of the Church in the area, inasmuch as they have all co-operated in producing it. And when they come together in this way the missionaries achieve more than a common version: they realize their fundamental unity as together they study the Book to which the whole Church appeals as the standard of faith. Here again the Bible Society is a Bridge-builder. For 118 years it has led the way in those co-operative methods, which are now being so happily applied in other departments of Christian service. Of the many unifying factors in the Church of Christ to-day the British and Foreign Bible Society is certainly not the least effective.

Union Versions.

A standard language and literature has had, and still has, an incalculable effect in unifying the English people. By printing so many versions—in Africa, for example—the Bible Society, it might be plausibly argued, is complicating the problems of education and government, and hindering the fusion of tribes: deepening chasms, in fact, rather than building bridges. Against this it may be urged that the stifling of national sentiment and local patriotism is not the surest way of bringing about the spiritual unification of mankind. Welshmen are not less, but more loyal to the

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British Commonwealth because they are passionately devoted to their national literature, and are free to enjoy it. Missionaries in Africa could not wait for the growth of a common speech ; as practical men they use the existing medium, and they know there is no surer way to a man's heart than through his mother-tongue. But missionaries and the Bible Society do not desire an unnecessary perpetuation of superfluous languages. Out of hundreds of forms of speech in use to-day many are bound to perish ; and the tendency is towards the unification of closely allied dialects. The Bible Society welcomes the drawing together of tribes and seeks to aid the process by promoting the issue of Union versions of the Scriptures.

Several such versions have already been published. A typical example is the Union Nyanja Bible issued this year by the National Bible Society of Scotland and the B.F.B.S. conjointly. Its history is illuminating. Scottish, English and Dutch missionaries produced versions in three forms of Nyanja spoken around Lake Nyasa in Central Africa. In 1900 a joint committee was formed for the purpose of producing a translation unifying these dialects. For twenty-five years the work has gone on under the direction of Dr. Hetherwick. The New Testament was completed some years ago ; it gained popularity at once and has since set the standard for the growing Nyanja literature. Now at length the Bible is complete. It will reach at least a million Africans, and will be at once a symbol and an instrument of their unity.

One Universal Dialect of the Spirit.

Dr. Marett, the eminent Oxford anthropologist, has said : " The supreme object of the study of our fellow-man is to join souls with him. . . . The natural bridge of souls is language. Having this faculty in common,

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human beings are capable of spiritual intercourse, whatever material barriers otherwise may tend to impede the process." This is very true; but when a missionary has crossed one ravine by this natural bridge he comes to other still wider and deeper ravines—those caused by different modes of thought. You may easily learn the natives' vocabulary, but you discover that they attach to words a different meaning from yours. You can find a word for "steal," for example, and natives will agree with you that it is wrong to steal. But you will quickly find that while the people from whom they may not steal are very few, those whom they may rob without compunction are very many. You may use the same word, but your ideas of stealing and theirs differ widely.

No man who has measured the tremendous chasms which divide men can indulge in rosy expectations of an imminent golden age of harmony and peace. But it is a fact of deepest significance that a common Christian conscience is actually spreading throughout the world. The Bible is becoming the common possession of the nations, a common text-book of ethics and religion the world over. If only the Bible Society could circulate sufficient copies of its existing editions, three-quarters of the human race would to-day be able to pray in their own tongue the one prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come . . ." As the work of the Church extends, old conflicting ideas of the Deity are giving way to a knowledge of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and morals are being built upon the foundation of the New Testament. Men are slowly learning to think alike on the greatest of subjects; they are, in fact, learning a spiritual dialect in common. The chasms are being bridged. •

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*"There shall be no more wars nor kingdoms won,
But in Thy sight whose eyes are as the sun
All names shall be one name, all nations one,
All souls of men in man's one soul unite."*

SWINBURNE, "A Year's Burden."

MAN'S progress in civilization may be measured by the span of the bridges he builds. The most primitive form of bridge is a tree that has fallen, or has been made to fall, across a narrow stream. Over against this we may place such a triumph of engineering skill as the Forth Bridge in Scotland, which is 5,330 feet long. The bridges which men construct in imagination far surpass anything the eye has ever seen. Mohammedans speak of one stretching between heaven and earth, which is finer than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword, and so long that it may take 25,000 years to cross. The span of *our* spiritual bridge is as far-reaching as the mercy of God.

There can be nothing parochial about the designs of the builders of this Bridge. Their sympathies must be as broad as the world, as deep as the needs of mankind. An all-embracing catholicity must mark their plans and methods.

A Truly Catholic Society.

The British and Foreign Bible Society still pursues the ideal set out in its original advertisement, dated

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March 1805 : "The principles upon which this undertaking will be conducted are as comprehensive as the nature of the object suggests that they should be. In the execution of the plan, it is proposed to embrace the common support of Christians at large, and to invite the concurrence of persons of every description who profess to regard the Scriptures as the proper Standard of Faith."

The Society is colour-blind to ecclesiastical differences, oblivious of national and racial distinctions.

Its honoured President is a Prince of the United Kingdom ; its Vice-Presidents include four Archbishops and fifty Bishops of the Anglican Communion, and the leaders of many other branches of the Church. Among its Honorary Foreign Members are the Armenian Patriarchs in Jerusalem and Constantinople ; the Archbishop of Ethiopia, the Archbishop of Upsala, the Archbishop of Finland, Bishop Nicolai Velimirovic of Serbia, the Archbishop of Syria, and the Œcumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church. By its Constitution six members of the Committee are "Foreigners"—a term which becomes a mere geographical expression when it enters the Bible House ; and among the Honorary Foreign Members of the Society there are representatives of at least twenty nationalities.

Its representatives abroad include a Frenchman at Paris, a Spaniard at Madrid, a German at Berlin, an Austrian at Vienna, a Hungarian at Buda Pesth, a Pole at Warsaw, a Czech at Prague, a Bulgarian at Varna, an Albanian at Korytza, an Italian at Rome, a Rumanian at Bucharest, a Greek at Athens, a Russian at Petrograd. A glance over the names of the 900 colporteurs reveals their un-English character : Sergiacomi, Ibañez, Karachopoulos, Abd-el-Masih, Mohammed Sadio, Akbar Hussain, San Ba, Po Thwe, Fatch Din, Maruyama Fusakichi, Kang Won ; nearly all, indeed, are nationals of the country where they work.

There is hardly a section of the Church of Christ that the Society does not serve. Most of the Missionary Societies depend upon it for their indispensable supplies of the Scriptures. Its editions are used as text-books in theological colleges in many lands—including Roman Catholic seminaries in Rome. This

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feature of the Society found recognition recently in a Roman Catholic newspaper, the *Gazeta Poniedziałkowa*, published in Warsaw on February 26, 1923: "The theological faculties, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, in the Warsaw and Posen Universities, exclusively use the Bible Society's editions, and most of the Polish clergy of all confessions are their constant customers." 40263

To study the Bible Society's Annual Report is in itself a liberal education. Few even of the men engaged in the active work of the Society can fully realize the vast ramifications of the enterprise. Only glimpses of it can be caught through our present meagre keyhole.

The Society maintains its own depots in about one hundred of the chief cities in the world, and the recognized sub-depots bring the figure up to over 200. They are established in such varied places as Lima and Lagos, Java and Jerusalem, Calcutta and Constantinople, Adelaide and Addis Abbaba, Valparaiso and Varna, Canton and Cape Town. They girdle the earth with their manifold and beneficent activities. They deal with a perplexing variety of languages. From the depot in Belgrade the Scriptures were sent out last year in 26 forms of speech, from Bombay in 38, from Rome in 45, from Port Said in 73. At Helsingfors there were demands for the Scriptures in Hawaiian, Tibetan and Syriac. 10263

Last year the Society issued 8,679,384 copies of the Scriptures, including 886,318 complete Bibles, 1,065,966 Testaments, and 6,727,100 portions. (By portions we mean, not extracts or anthologies, but complete books of the Bible, mostly Gospels and Psalters.) In China it circulated 3,190,000 copies; in Europe, 1,287,000; in India, 885,000; in Canada and Newfoundland, 280,000; in South America, 269,000; in Africa, 230,000; in Japan, 220,000.

The Society has published, or has assisted in circulating, editions in embossed type for the blind in 38 forms of speech; it has issued 100 diglots, i.e. editions in two languages printed in parallel columns or on opposite pages. Its ordinary editions are printed in over sixty different alphabets or sets of characters. Only about one-third of the total number is produced in England, the remainder being printed abroad, largely in the countries where they are circulated. Last year, for example,

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over 3,000,000 volumes were printed in China, 508,000 in Germany, 251,000 in Italy. The Society's price-list of English and Welsh Scriptures includes particulars of 391 editions; the London price-list of Foreign Scriptures comprises 1,221 editions, and is incomplete because it omits details of the majority of Chinese and other editions.

For our own Kith and Kin.

Of the Society's total issues last year, more than 1,100,000 were in English, Welsh, Gaelic or Irish, and circulated mainly within the British Empire. The fact that the English and Welsh volumes numbered 317,000 more than in 1921 may point, we trust, to a revival of Bible-reading in the Homeland.

The Society is well organized in all parts of the British Commonwealth overseas. Take, for example, what is reported from South Australia.

"During the year a steady flow has gone forth from the Bible House, Adelaide, some to lonely parts of the bush, some to hospitals, refuges, prisoners' associations, missions in the city, and other institutions. The books have gone out in the following languages: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Chinese, Danish, Urdu, Hebrew, Welsh, Swedish, Norwegian, Japanese, Dutch, Arabic, Maltese, Fijian, Greek, and Marathi, so that we have been able to meet general needs and requirements. The door of the Bible House stands open to all who require the Word of God in their mother-tongue. Hundreds of little Gospels have been distributed in city and country, and these have had an influence on many lives. Many requests have been received for copies of the Scriptures, and no real case of need has been refused. Copies for the blind have been gratuitously supplied, while the needs of aged people with failing sight have not been forgotten. Hebrew and Greek Scriptures have been presented to the students of our theological colleges, while bush Sunday Schools, as well as the scattered homes on the East-West line, have received copies of the Bible."

The beginnings of Bible Society work in New Zealand carry us back to the early history of the colony. In 1830 the New South Wales Auxiliary printed a Maori version of certain New Testament books, and seven years later the whole Testament

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was printed in New Zealand by the Church Missionary Society, liberally assisted by our Society. The Maoris showed their gratitude by generous offerings of Indian corn and native potatoes, and these formed the first contributions from New Zealand to the Bible Society. In later years our supporters organized themselves into local Auxiliaries. A handsome Bible House was built at Wellington in 1920, mainly at the expense of New Zealand friends. Last year the Scriptures were circulated in fifteen languages besides English, and from this it is evident, says the Rev. A. T. Thompson, our Secretary, that New Zealand is being swept into the maelstrom of world movements and world affairs. Testimonies from various quarters speak of an increased demand for the Scriptures on the part of the Maoris, and steps are now being taken to issue a new edition of the Bible for them.

In the Never-Never Lands.

People in the Homeland cannot realize the isolation of life in the outlying regions of the Empire. Year by year the pioneers move forward into new districts where they may pass years without entering a church and where the education of their children is a standing and pressing problem. The Bishop of Bloemfontein has recently touched on this. He writes: "We have to deal, in this country [South Africa] particularly, with dwellers in remote places, who see a priest perhaps once a month or less frequently. We must give them solid food to keep them in union with their Saviour, and this food is regular prayer and study of the Gospels." The least that should be done for these blazers of the trail is to see that they have a Bible in every house and shack.

To the best of its ability this is what the Bible Society aims at doing. Canada, for example, is spanned from ocean to ocean by Bible-houses—at St. John, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver—and from these centres the Canadian

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Bible Society (which is an Auxiliary of the B.F.B.S.) last year circulated 280,000 copies of the Scriptures among a population which numbers about 9,000,000. Some of the 44 colporteurs and 12 Biblewomen work among the scattered folk on the prairies. One of them, the Rev. I. Burkholder, visited some 4,000 families, ministering to their spiritual needs and supplying them with the Scriptures. The Rev. Dr. J. Knox Wright, of Vancouver, thus summarizes the work done :—

“ Our Dominion has been well served in many ways for more than a century by the British and Foreign Bible Society. From ocean to ocean the pioneer settlers and their families have been sought out and supplied with the Scriptures. Congregations have sprung into being from seed which colporteurs have dropped by the wayside in new districts throughout the land. Mission Sunday Schools have been helped with liberal gifts of Bibles. This Society serves the aboriginal Indian tribes by distributing among them the Word of Life in about a score of their native dialects. It serves the whole Dominion in a very special way by giving to immigrants copies in diglot form.”

Immigrants.

The religious problem in new lands is complicated by the flocking in of immigrants of many nationalities.

Out of the 413,000 who entered Canada during the years 1918–22, a very large proportion came from outside the British Empire: The Bible Society is on the spot to welcome the strangers at the moment of landing with a Gospel or Testament in their own language or in diglot form. Unobtrusive and unpretentious as the service is, its effects at that susceptible moment are profound and far-reaching. During last navigation season our representative at Quebec, and her assistant, distributed 29,000 copies of the Scriptures in English and 8,500 in 29 foreign languages. At other ports, such as Vancouver, work on a similar scale was carried out. Since 1910 the British Columbia Auxiliary has distributed 144,900 copies in about 40 languages. Gifts, chiefly to foreigners, have totalled over 50,000. Special attention has been given to the Doukhobors in the interior, to the coast

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groups of East Indians, Chinese and Japanese, and to the scattered fragments of foreign races all over the province.

At St. John a Chinaman who landed from a West Indies boat found a Gospel in his own tongue, and held it up before his fellow-travellers, saying, "Ho si, ho si," meaning "Good book, good book." They all accepted copies. Our agent describes meeting a Chinese family on board one ship. "A four-year-old tot of the family came running to me and put his arms around my neck. Needless to say, I was well received by the father and mother, who took a great interest in the Book I carried. The father told me that up till then he never saw the Bible, but he promised me he would read carefully the Gospel I gave him."

In the Silver Land.

Argentina, the South American republic which supplies Europe with more beef, frozen and chilled, than any other country, is another favourite bourn of the home-seeking emigrant. Its vast pampas, with their fertile virgin soil, and the great cattle estancias with the frigorificos, are capable of absorbing vast multitudes. Here our work is hampered by the prevailing illiteracy. Last year we circulated 81,000 copies of the Scriptures in Argentina, and it is significant that they were in the 46 languages here named: Arabic, Armenian, Albanian, Aymara, Bulgarian, Bohemian, Basque, Catalan, Carib, Chinese, Croatian, Danish, Dutch, English, Esperanto, French, Flemish, Finnish, Greek, German, Guarani, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Judæo-Spanish, Latin, Lettish, Lithuanian, Lengua, Norwegian, Portuguese, Polish, Quechua, Russian, Ruthenian, Romansch, Rumanian, Spanish, Swedish, Syriac, Serbian, Samogit, Slavonic, Yiddish, Yaghan.

Refugees.

From immigrants to refugees is a natural step, and this transports us back from the New World to the Old.

The tragedy in Asia Minor, September 1922, will be fresh in the memory of our readers. Thousands of panic-stricken Greeks swarmed into Smyrna before the advance of the victorious Turks, and when the city was taken and burnt great numbers of them perished miserably. The Greek Archbishop, a warm friend of our Society, was tortured to death. For long it was

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thought that the Bible House had been burnt down, but most recent news assures us that it escaped destruction. Hundreds of thousands of unhappy refugees from Asia Minor were carried in the most pitiable condition to Greece. Our Superintendent in Athens, Mr. Sirinides, wrote that the streets of that and other cities were crowded with people who had lost everything. A good many of them came to our depot to beg for Bibles to replace those they had lost, saying that the refugees who had managed to retain their Bibles must have felt happier because they could find consolation in the precious Word of God. The Society distributed freely some thousands of copies of the Scriptures among these people. One letter of thanks, written in English, came from a Girls' Orphanage :—

“ DEAR SIR,

With this letter we wish to make known to you our hearty thanks for your goodness. Yes, that was a very great kindness that you have done us. Twice we were in need, for in truth we have been in great need, of the help of God's Word. God cared for us in all kinds of dangers, and now as much as our pencil allows us [note, the letter is written in pencil] we wish to make known to you the fervent thanks of our hearts for the gift of His Word. All our Bibles except one were burned. Thank you again. We beg that the life of all like you may be long and may continue like evergreen trees.

May your sun never set,

Yours respectfully,

ARMENIAN ORPHAN GIRLS.”

Constantinople, too, has been crowded with refugees. Among others, Chaldeans, descendants of the people of Nineveh, that great city, found their way to the Society's depot, and were delighted to find the Scriptures in their own Syriac tongue. They covered the books with kisses and sang their Church chants in thanksgiving.

The events in their country of late years have scattered thousands of Russians as a tornado scatters autumnal leaves. Many of them, reduced to abject poverty and torn by anxiety as to the fate of loved ones, have gladly accepted the comfort of God's Word. In Constantinople, in Egypt, Italy, Germany, Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Finland, China, our records show that copies of the Scriptures were distributed to them during the year.

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In Russia.

And what of Russia itself, where under the old regime the Bible Society enjoyed special facilities, employed 73 colporteurs and circulated about 600,000 volumes annually? Under the present government the teaching of the Bible is prohibited in schools, and Bible classes and religious teaching of any kind to groups of pupils have been forbidden in private houses. Several of the Society's veteran workers remain in the country, but cannot carry on colportage. One of them, writing in February 1923 about parcels of food sent to them, said: "We look forward to the receipt of same as children look out for Christmas Day." The Society's depot in Petrograd remains open, and our latest advices say that a rent of 800,000,000 roubles a month is to be charged for it. That sum, calculated in pre-war values, would represent an annual rental of £960,000,000—considerably more than the total national debt of Great Britain in 1914! Actually it represents less than £50. Our depositary, who lives on the premises, wrote recently: "I am alone, and myself prepare all the food I eat. . . . I have not enjoyed a bath in the town for four years; it is too expensive."

The Bible Society has printed large editions of the Russian Scriptures in readiness for sending across the frontier whenever it shall become possible. Some consignments did actually enter Russia last year under special licence, and reached their destination. Large numbers of copies have been purchased from us by other religious organizations, but we cannot tell how many of them have reached Russia.

Our assistant agent at Ekaterinburg, which before the war was the centre of successful Bible work in Siberia, escaped on one of the last trains to leave the city before its capture by revolutionaries, and reached Chita, where he found a considerable stock of the Scriptures in our depot and was able to carry on colportage

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work. Sales became impossible as the Bolsheviki gained power in the district, and our agent and his family were reduced to extreme poverty. Finally they were able to travel to Vladivostok, where for some time they were able to continue work. but our latest news is that this too has been stopped.

In the Holy Land.

Palestine is no larger than Wales. A little land, but what a place in history is held by

Those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

Nowhere perhaps in the world to-day are racial antipathies, embittered by credal differences, more pronounced. Palestine is riven by discord—Moslem against Moslem, Jew against Jew, Christian against Christian, Jews and Christians and Moslems all at feud with each other; it is an epitome of mankind's racial pride, class prejudice and mad nationalism. Deep fissures run everywhere through this population of 750,000,—less than that of Liverpool. Christ's Gospel of reconciliation is nowhere more needed than in the land that is peculiarly His own. Here the Bible Society is in its right and proper place. It occupies a unique position in the estimation of the people. It circulated nearly 12,000 copies of the Scriptures last year—in 41 languages. Two colporteurs worked among other places in Nazareth, Hebron, Ramah, Ashdod and Gaza.

The Society's present depot is well situated facing the General Post Office in Jerusalem. It is, however, inadequate, and for some years our Committee has been desirous of erecting a Bible House which in simple dignity should be worthy of the Holy City. The site, we are glad to say, has been secured and paid for out

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of special contributions. An appeal is now made for funds towards the building itself.

The Rev. Dr. Rohold, of the British Jews' Society in Haifa, writes as follows :—

“We had a very interesting case not long ago in our Bible Depot. It was filled with all kinds and conditions of men. A Moslem wanted a New Testament, but when we told him the price (4 piastres, tenpence), he said that he was very poor and could not purchase it. Before we had time to reply, a Jew who was sitting near said: ‘Do you really want to read and possess the book?’ ‘Yes,’ the Moslem replied. ‘In that case,’ said the Jew, ‘I will pay for it; it is bound to do him good.’ The kindly act of this Jew, who was not a rich man, reveals a new spirit of liberality. It is this Word of God which will ultimately bring peace to these divided and distracted people.”

So in the Near East the Bible Society perseveres in seeking to restore the Holy Scriptures as a living voice speaking to all men, whether Jew or Christian, Moslem or Pagan, the wonderful message of the mercy and peace of God.

In the Land of the Pharaohs.

Many observers are of the opinion that in Egypt—whose political independence was proclaimed last year—the outlook has never been so bright for missionary work, and the more favourable attitude of the Moslems towards the Gospel is ascribed in large measure to the circulation of the Scriptures.

“The Arabic Gospel,” says the Rev. S. A. Morrison in the *Church Missionary Outlook*, “is probably the ‘best seller’ in Egypt to-day.” Our own records go to substantiate the opinion of this experienced missionary. “It is encouraging,” writes Mr. Hooper, our Secretary, “to find the Gospel in these days a most saleable book.” At least 75 per cent. of the books sold last year went directly to Moslem readers.

Our Bible House at Port Said is the headquarters of a vast Agency which embraces Egypt, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

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(the area of which is five times that of France), Abyssinia, Somaliland, Eritrea, the Arabian littoral of the Red Sea, Palestine, Syria and Cyprus. There are depots at Khartum, Cairo, Alexandria, Tanta, Beirut, Jerusalem and Addis Abbaba. Colporteurs travel over wide areas from these centres. Hundreds of ships were visited in the harbours of Alexandria and Port Said. No fewer than 23 Missions were supplied with the Scriptures.

The Bible Society in Africa.

Few things in the recent history of the Society are more noteworthy than the vast development of its work in Africa.

During the fifty years that have elapsed since the death of David Livingstone at Chitambo, May 1, 1873, more has been done to redeem the Dark Continent than in any previous thousand years. The African is waking out of his age-long lethargy. He is everywhere going to school, and nine-tenths of the schools are in the hands of missionaries. The Bible has followed in Livingstone's footsteps, and gone where he never went. In 1873 some part of the Scriptures were translated into 29 African languages spoken on or near the coast. Twenty years ago the number had increased to 109; in 1923 we are able to report 164 African versions on our Society's list, and 53 published by other organizations—a total of 217. Thanks to the enterprise of Christian missions, many of these versions are now in use where, within the lifetime of most of us, white men had never penetrated. In some mission fields the Bible Society's colporteurs are able to go ahead of the missionaries, preparing their way; in Africa, because writing and reading were unknown until introduced by the missions, the Bible Society follows in the track of the missionary, printing and supplying the Scriptures which he needs in his work. Outside the Egyptian Agency the Society has divided Africa into five great areas, each in charge of a Secretary whose business it is to study the needs of the countries, keep in touch with all the missions and promote translation and distribution of the Scriptures. Our Secretaries in West and Central Africa have travelled widely. The latter, Mr. W. J. W. Roome, has crossed Africa seven times, and covered 52,000 miles—more than Livingstone, Stanley and Cameron combined. The most hopeful feature of all the developments in Africa is that these child-nations are being nurtured on the Bible.

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India.

Passing, in our rapid survey, through the Moslem lands of the Middle East—Mesopotamia and Persia, where our Society is doing a great work—we come to India, where three out of every four British subjects live. Here the Society works from seven principal centres: Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Allahabad, Lahore and Rangoon. The *Swadeshi* (Home Rule) movement has to some extent militated against the sale of the Scriptures, but amid much that has perplexed and disturbed the minds of those who love the Indian people and who desire most sincerely to see them develop into nationhood on wise lines, it has cheered us exceedingly to note the public utterances of some of the most trusted popular leaders. With no uncertain voice they have declared their attitude to the Bible and to Christian missions. More and more Jesus Christ is being acknowledged as the world's moral Ideal. Men point to His sincerity, His selflessness, His tenderness to women and children, and His championship of the poverty-stricken and oppressed: and assuredly they are discovering the Saviour. One Indian thinker recently said: "If ever there was a time when the educated Indian paid conscious homage to Jesus Christ, it is in the year 1922." It is the missionaries who have brought this about, and the missionary employs not only the spoken but also the written Word. The Bible Society has played its part, by supplying the Scriptures in some 80 Indian languages and dialects.

In the Far East.

Catching, as we pass, a glimpse of Ceylon, Malaya, Java, Sumatra and Indo-China (where Bible work was carried on successfully last year), we arrive at the lands



Photo by

(Underground Press Service.)

A MIAO WOMAN AND HER CHILDREN.

The Bible Society recently published St. Mark's Gospel in the Chuan Miao language spoken in Western China. A missionary writes: "Some of the Miao

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where the Bible has won some of its greatest triumphs—China, Japan and Korea.

At the Society's anniversary in 1823 the eldest son of Marshman of Serampore laid on the chairman's table a copy of the first entire Bible in Chinese; in the same year the Chinese version of the Bible translated by Morrison and Milne was published. The Chinese have, therefore, had the Bible for a hundred years—a short period in the lifetime of a nation. Since 1814 the Society has circulated over 52,000,000 copies of the Scriptures in China. What has been the result of a century of missionary toil? To a superficial observer it might appear that the Bible had brought anything but reconciliation and peace to the 320,000,000 people of China. With its misrule, its brigandage and discord, China is in an unhappy condition to-day. The only cheerful aspect is the large and growing Christian Church, which at the great Conference at Shanghai last year had the first opportunity of expressing itself, and which will unquestionably provide the men who will make the New China. The power of the Bible is seen best in the lives of the hundreds and thousands of these Christians. Missionaries and Bible Society workers know that the flowing tide is with them, and are by no means dismayed at the present position. Our Society has covered China with a network of distributing agencies. Out of all the encouraging reports that have reached us we have here room only for an extract relating to the Chuan Miao in whose dialect the Bible Society printed the Gospel of St. Mark last year:—

“Sales of the Chinese Gospels have been few in this region, as the Miao are suspicious of the Chinese and only one in a hundred can read Chinese; but now that your Society has sent this edition of the Gospel of St. Mark in the Chuan [‘Water’] Miao language there will be a great demand for it. Some of the Miao have been looking for this as thirsty men look for water. They thank you and your Society from the depths of their hearts for sending these Gospels and for making it possible for them to have col-porteurs. A few weeks ago an old Chuan Miao of seventy summers tramped four days to have a look at and to thank the missionary who had taken the glad tidings to his tribe. When he came into my study to proffer his thanks his face was brimming over with joy, and in expressing his gratitude words failed him. His thanks and the thanks of all the Chuan Miao under our care we pass on to you and to the kind friends who assist in this great work.”

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As to Korea, it will be sufficient to say that the Church of Christ is making steady progress. Our circulation increased considerably last year—to over 591,000 copies. As one missionary writes: “The future of the Church in Korea is secure so long as the Bible continues to be sold.”

An Inadequate Survey.

This survey of the Bible Society's work is admittedly inadequate. We have passed over the Islands, great and small, but there is hardly an islet in the remotest oceans that does not owe something to the Society. Europe has received scant notice, but no part of the world gives our Committee more anxious thought. South America is not “the neglected continent” to the Bible Society, whose agencies cover the land.

It is only want of space that has prevented our describing, if but briefly, the splendid work carried on, in friendly rivalry and unison of purpose, by the sister Bible Societies. It is no idle boast to say that together we have spanned the world.

From New Zealand to Africa.

The Rev. A. T. Thompson reports that many young people in New Zealand sent Christmas gifts of threepence and upwards to provide Gospels or Testaments for boys and girls in India, China and Africa. Of the amount thus subscribed, 15s. came from the young Maoris of Otaki who wished their gift to benefit African boys and girls on Mary Slessor's field in Africa. This is a fact of strange beauty and pathos when one recalls the story of the introduction of Christianity into Otaki.

Some of the Gospels in Maori had already been in circulation before the publication of the New Testament in 1837 and missionary records of the time bear testimony to the marvellous effects produced by them.

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One of these small volumes belonged to a converted Maori named Ngakuku, and was always carried by his daughter Tarore, a child of about eleven years, who had learned to read. Ngakuku and his party were attacked, while travelling, by a number of Maoris on the war-path, and in the confusion little Tarore was left behind ; she was killed and her Gospel carried off by the raiders with the rest of the plunder. The little book had a mission to fulfil. The chief of these raiders was converted, and his first step was the last that would have been expected from a barbarian. He wrote to Ngakuku asking permission to enter the chapel—the chapel in his own village, not the one that Ngakuku frequented. He felt that without the goodwill of the man whose child he had murdered he could not enter *any* Christian place of worship. Subsequently they worshipped God together in the same building.

Still the story of Tarore's Gospel continues. Otaki is a place on the south-west coast of the North Island. Before any missionary had reached it, a native named Matahau returned home with this Gospel in his possession. His chief sent for him to learn more of the teaching of the white missionaries, but as he would not come the chief went to him. Matahau had in the meantime parted with the book. "It was a bad book," he said ; "it told people not to have two wives, not to drink rum, not to fight, but to live in peace and to pray to God." He had given it away in exchange for cartridges. The chief recovered it before many of its leaves had been torn away—bought it with mats and tobacco—and persuaded Matahau, sadly loath, to teach him to read it. The result was that the chief sailed to the Church Missionary Society station in the Bay of Islands and begged for a missionary. In

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answer to this request, the Rev. O. Hadfield, who in 1838 had just arrived from England, was sent to Otaki. Later he became the first Bishop of Wellington. The chief was baptized. That was eighty years ago. Now the descendants of those who received Christianity first through a single copy of a single Gospel subscribe to send the same Gospels to black brothers and sisters in Africa. Such is the fellowship of our Bible Society work. It bridges a gulf between peoples.

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*"Off alle werkys in this world that ever were wrought
Holy Church is chefe.
Another blessid business is brigges to make,
When that the pepul may not passe after greet showers,
Dole it is to drawe a dead body out of a lake,
That was fullid in a fount ston and a felow of oures."*

LINES ENGRAVED ON THE BRIDGE OF CULHAM.

IN the Middle Ages the building and maintenance of bridges was regarded as part of the Church's campaign against evil—not merely a work of utility, but a pious and meritorious duty like visiting the sick or providing for the poor. Among the religious associations founded to carry out this duty on behalf of Christian people the best known is that of the *Fratres Pontifices*, a bridge-building brotherhood founded by St. Bénézet, who, it is said, was divinely inspired as a boy to build the bridge over the Rhone at Avignon, four arches and the chapel of which are still standing. The members of this guild wore a distinctive habit, and their badge was a pick. They built many bridges in France, often replacing old timber structures by stone ones; they lodged and entertained travellers; they ministered in the bridge-chapels. These medieval confraternities were organized in three branches: the knights, who contributed most of the money and were accordingly named *donati*; the clergy, who were

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the directors, architects and collectors; and the artisans, who did the actual work. "Sisters" were also associated in this pious duty.

It would be difficult to find an apter title for the Bible Society than the Brotherhood of the Bridge. It is a great international confraternity devoted to the task of bridging spiritual chasms. Many thousands of people are associated in this happy task: colporteurs and collectors and clergy; missionaries and merchants; accountants, clerks and warehousemen; scholars and school-boys and school-girls; men, women and children of various nationalities, belonging to many Christian communions, but all united in the one purpose of bringing God's Word of Reconciliation to the homes and hearts of mankind. Let us look at some of these bridge-builders.

An Anonymous Brother.

Many of them never figure in any list of workers, but they render incalculable service, and, though we may not know their names, we must claim them for the Brotherhood. In the *International Review of Missions* for January, 1923, Canon W. H. T. Gairdner tells of one of them.

"We think of a certain officer in the recent war, a doctor, a layman, an R.A.M.C. man stationed in the near Mohammedan East. He knew no Arabic, or only a smattering thereof. He had a black Sudanese servant, a Mohammedan of Africa, of the kind that is usually considered in advance hopeless from an 'evangelistic' point of view. This officer was thus doubly and trebly a layman in regard to 'foreign missions': but he was also a Christian who considered that in the Christ-life and witness nothing is 'foreign'—*nullum humanum a se alienum putabat*! We may conceive that two small black-bound books were not kept at the bottom of his kitbag, and that the nature of these books and of their morning use was very accurately known to the black, Sudanese, Mohammedan servant. One

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could hardly be wrong over this guess : but the sequel is not guesswork, namely, that one day this lay, unofficial Christian Englishman presented this Mohammedan African with a Gospel in his own Arabic tongue. That was all ; but it was enough. It was an act of witness ; and the African understood that the Something enshrined in that book was common to the Englishman and to himself. Some unity, divine in origin, comprehended them both. The Christian brotherhood was not a close corporation. He read the book, and its message went home. And *then* came the opportunity of the mission station, of the specialized missionary who did know Arabic, and of the teachers who had the time and the training to teach. The youth was taught : he was baptized : he continued in the habit of direct witness, and to-day he is bearing that witness in the peninsula of Arabia itself, the very home of the religion of the great Arabian Mohammed himself.

“ Could not this sort of simple proceeding be multiplied to any extent, provided that all who know themselves Christians reverted to the primitive faith in the universality of Christ’s Kingdom of God, and to this primitive method of bringing it in—direct witness wherever the Christian happens to be ?

“ Not otherwise can Islam be evangelized--or even attracted. For not otherwise can the unnecessary human stumbling-blocks be removed which Christians have added to the inevitable divine stumbling-block of the Cross, namely, their virtual annihilation of Christian human brotherhood.”

Some Others.

Here are some other examples of anonymous fellow-workers. In Macedonia a goldsmith and a tailor, hearing of the Bible Society, bought several copies of the Psalms and Proverbs. Whenever the goldsmith sells a piece of jewellery he offers his customer a copy of the Scriptures, saying : “ This is the best ornament for souls ; keep your soul always decorated with the Word of God.” And the tailor when he sells a suit of clothes never forgets to say : “ These garments cover the body only ; take this book I am offering you, and if you read it carefully you shall find that Christ will cover your naked soul also.” A Moslem

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bought so many Testaments from one of our depots in Persia that our agent asked him the reason. "I will not dig and hide my Lord's money, but take and give," he replied. He meant that he bought the books to give to others. An Italian colporteur reported last year that a Neapolitan barber bought a Bible from him every month. "I learnt in America to value this book," said the barber; "there is not much I can do, but I can spend five *lire* a month for the extension of the Kingdom of God." He, too, meant that he bought in order to give to others. Many people are like the influential Jew, the head of a large business in Egypt, who has supplied each of his employés with a Bible in his own language. Last Christmas and New Year two firms in Rio de Janeiro presented copies of the New Testament to their employés, and another firm sent out Testaments to their customers in place of the usual calendars. Last Christmas, in Buenos Aires, the Sunday schools visited the prisons, sang to the inmates, and distributed Gospels which they had purchased from our Society.

Collaboration with the Bible Society takes other forms. In Finland, for example, we enjoy free freights and free travelling on the State railways; the Finnish Steamship Company carries all our books free or at a greatly reduced tariff, and the Helsingfors Municipal Council exempts us from harbour duties. Three of the Northern Europe republics have granted us freedom from customs duties. Of their own accord the Union of Custom-house porters at Riga offered to reduce their charges for handling our cases of books. In South America valuable privileges are granted to the Society. In Bolivia and Peru the railways have for the past eighteen years provided our colporteurs with free passes. In Venezuela and Colombia we are granted free transport and free tickets on the railways and reduced fares on the river-steamers. Similar concessions are granted in Java and in the Malay States. For all these privileges, which represent many hundreds of pounds, the Society expresses its gratitude.

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Our Missionary Partners.

The Bible Society may well claim the missionaries of almost every Reformed Church as members of its world Brotherhood. Its association with these heralds of the Cross is always of the happiest character. On the one hand, the Society provides the missionaries with nearly all the editions and versions which they use in their varied work; and it does this on such terms that the books practically entail no expense to the Boards and Committees of the Missions which obtain them. It is the Society's pride that it has never yet refused a request to print any properly authenticated version of at least the greater part, if not the whole, of the Scriptures for any Mission. On the other hand, we heartily and fully acknowledge that missionaries furnish the Society with many of its most accomplished translators, its most effective distributors, its most convinced and convincing advocates.

Missionaries the wide world over readily acknowledge the value of this partnership.

Not long ago the Archbishop of Brisbane was reported thus in the columns of a leading newspaper published in that city: "I am going to preside at a meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society. . . . The debt of gratitude which the New Guinea Mission owes to this Society is so great that I feel I can never do enough to repay it. Probably every missionary bishop in the world would say the same."

Speaking at the Bible House last January from his experience in Madagascar, Bishop King, secretary of the S.P.G., declared: "There is not a missionary, I believe, who can truly say that, the translated Bibles and Testaments which the Bible Society puts within his reach, are not necessary to his work. . . . In pushing the sale of the Scriptures, you are building up the Church of Christ."

The Rev. H. M. Dauncey, of the London Missionary Society, Delena, Port Moresby, New Guinea, has forwarded the following

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resolution: "That the Papua District Committee of the L.M.S. heartily thank the British and Foreign Bible Society for the new edition of the New Testament in the Namau language received last year." Mr. Dauncey adds: "If we counted the number of similar resolutions that I have sent you during the last thirty-four years, one would get an idea of the amount of help you have given us by printing versions of either the whole New Testament or parts of the same."

Writing from Kenora, Ontario, Canon J. Lofthouse informs us that at a recent meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Keewatin the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "That a hearty vote of thanks be extended to the B.F.B.S. for the very valuable help which that Society has rendered to the Diocese."

An official of the Church Missionary Society wrote as follows: "I have to thank you for your letter of October 7th relating to the following grants on 'missionary terms' which your Committee have most generously made to this Society: 3,000 copies of St. Luke in *Ilanga*; 1,000 copies of the New Testament in the *Dabida* dialect of *Taita*; and 2,000 copies of the Acts of the Apostles in *Kikuyu*. We are very much indebted to your Committee for this and all their other invaluable help to God's work among the peoples in C.M.S. mission fields in East Africa."

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Union of South America in March, 1923, Mr. F. C. Glass said: "Thank God for the British and Foreign Bible Society! It has never failed us. Thanks to it the Bible to-day is the best-known book in Brazil. We are able to sell the Bible in the heart of Brazil, two thousand miles or more from the coast, at the same price, or sometimes a little less than, it would cost to buy it here in London. Think what that means in a land where books are very scarce and very dear. There are thousands of homes in Brazil that I know of where the Bible is the only book the people possess."

Missionaries who Sell the Scriptures.

Many missionaries take an active share with colporteurs and evangelists in the sale of the Scriptures, and out of their own experience testify to the value of this method of preaching the Gospel.

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The Rev. A. E. Ball, of the Church Missionary Society, who is leaving India after over forty years' service, writes as follows of his experience last year at Quetta :—

“ I have tried hard to get our workers to sell the Scriptures in the bazaar. By selling them myself I have acted on the principle that example is better than precept. I have succeeded in selling 810 portions. Preaching in the bazaar is forbidden here—I think, rightly so—but there is not a word against book-selling, which, to use the words of a Hindu, is the best method of propagating the Christian faith. One gets surrounded by from ten to twenty people, and is able to read a few verses and comment on them, to answer the many questions asked, and to solve the difficulties raised. The opportunities opened up by this kind of work are great. In many ways book-selling brings opportunities of removing prejudice, explaining difficulties, dealing with opposition, and speaking a word for Christ. Further, this particular form of service is full of interest, and one incomparable way of broadcasting the Seed of the Word.”

The Hope of the World.

Lady missionaries in India also make good use of their opportunities for putting the Gospels into the hands of the people. One of them writes as follows :—

“ I also have been selling portions of the Bible. Lately I was in a shop in the city and saw hanging on the wall the picture *The Hope of the World*, Christ with the children of five countries gathered round Him. I commented on it and asked where it had come from, and after telling me, the man said very wistfully : ‘ Christ is as much for the children of India as for the children of England.’ He took St. Matthew’s Gospel from me to read for himself the Sermon on the Mount which he had heard of, and then three customers coming in, they also took portions. One man said to me : ‘ You can come and teach my wife all the Christianity you know ; the more she learns the better pleased I shall be.’ ”

One Method of Evangelism in Ceylon.

A missionary in Ceylon wrote to the *Ceylon Methodist Church Record* telling of his experiences.

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“The printed Word remains. Sermons, addresses, conversations may all be forgotten. But the printed Word remains, and may be taken up and read and re-read many a time. There are limits to the carrying powers both of the human voice and of the human legs. But there is no telling where a book—or even a page of a book—may not penetrate. It may lie neglected and dust-covered on a shelf for months and then provide wrapping for a cigar or a sweetmeat and be taken on a journey, and on the way may speak a message that will transform a whole life. All can purchase ten or a dozen three-cent Gospel portions, or the Acts, from the Bible House. When going on a journey, whether by road or rail, a few of these can be slipped into one’s pocket and offered to fellow-travellers or those met with by the way.

“The present writer has deliberately set himself to this work this year and has been amazed beyond measure at the success God has given him. He had previously discovered that people were very ready to buy these books, but time after time his littleness of faith has been rebuked by the number of books bought and the necessity of returning home owing to exhausted stocks while there were still requests for the books. The day before this was written he had to wait about ten minutes for a friend at a busy junction. During that short time nine Sinhalese and two Tamil St. Mark’s Gospels were sold, some to the coolies who were engaged in road-metalling. The previous night, after rather disappointing sales after an open-air service, he took the remainder of his stock and spent about three-quarters of an hour in the vicinity of a toddy tavern, and there some twenty-five Sinhalese Gospels, a dozen Tamil, and five in three other languages were disposed of—all at full prices.

“Altogether, from the beginning of February, when the work was started, up to the time of writing, no less than 1,391 copies of the Gospels and Acts and fifteen copies of the New Testament have been thus put into the hands of the people.

“The people are ready—able to read and willing to buy. Thanks to the spread of education, the majority of the people are able to read, at any rate in the Maritime districts. And this putting of the Scriptures into their hands is only the logical and necessary completion of the educational work our Church has undertaken so largely in the past. And at the same time the size and cheapness of the Gospel portions supplied by that handmaid of all the Missionary Societies, the British and Foreign

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Bible Society, appeals to the people, and there seems to be great readiness to buy these little books. No doubt some will be destroyed when their character is discovered, and many will be tossed aside unread. But what of that? Our duty is to put the story of Jesus and the picture of His life within reach of all. 'How shall they believe in Him (of) whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?' Here is a sermon which the dumbest and the most shy amongst us can deliver."

In South America.

We may cite other instances of missionaries who spread abroad the Scriptures, as well as preach. Two missionaries travelled in a small launch up the River Paraguay last year and sold some hundreds of copies, many of them to Guarani Indians. During the last two-and-a-half years Mr. R. Rowdon, a missionary in Bolivia, travelled over 3,000 miles on a motor-cycle and circulated some 5,000 copies of the Scriptures. The Indians called his cycle *juc'ucha* (a rat) because it was small and ran quickly. Another missionary carried our editions in his motor-launch far up the Amazon and some of its tributaries. Another made long journeys on horseback in the mountainous regions of Colombia, and on several occasions almost lost his life. Mr. Daniel Wilkins, a young Welshman, achieved a remarkable journey across the wilds of Bolivia from Cochachamba to Santa Cruz, selling the Scriptures *en route*.

The Colporteurs.

Great as is the help rendered by other partners, our chief agency in the dissemination of the Scriptures is the colporteur. Throughout 1922 the Bible Society maintained about 900 Biblemen and Biblewomen. Of these 56 worked in Canada, 40 in South America, 358 in

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China, 139 in Korea, 23 in Japan, 14 in Malaya, 22 in Ceylon, 116 in India, 23 in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, 100 in Europe. Drawn from many Christian communions, they are of divers races and speak all manner of languages, but are united in love for the Holy Scriptures, to some winged word of which many of them trace their own conversion. These "bearers of heavenly flame from the celestial altar" are indefatigable in their mission. An American who travelled with one of them said: "He gets about like a whirlwind"; of another an observer said: "He approaches more nearly to perpetual motion than anything I ever saw." Last year they sold nearly 5,000,000 volumes. Their fields of labour are picturesquely diverse. They are to be found on the sugar plantations of Peru, on the nitrate pampas of Chile, in the silver and tin mines of Bolivia, on the petroleum fields of Rumania, on the rubber estates of the Malay Peninsula. They sold in Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas; in the holy city of Kairwan, in Tunisia; in Meshed, the holiest city of Persia; on the mountainous frontiers of Tibet. They faced bitter opposition from nationalists in Mandalay; they were mishandled by brigands in Manchuria. They penetrated to the Whitechapel of Constantinople and to republican clubs in Spain. They threaded their way through the surging streets of China and India. One sold Gospels at a Fascist Congress in Naples; another on a Moslem pilgrim ship in the Red Sea. One journeyed down the waters of the Orinoco; another ascended the Nile above Khartum. They spoke of God to the war-harassed denizens of Ypres, Elverdinghe, and Zillebeke. They won their way among sun-worshippers in Ecuador; among monks in the grounds of a Serbian monastery; among *llaneros*, cowboys, in Venezuela; among

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lumber-men in Northern Ontario; among the hardy fishermen of Brittany; among Shinto priests in Japan. They laboured on the broad rice-plains abutting upon the Yellow Sea and in the far-off mountain villages of Korea. One of them crossed some of the highest mountain passes of the Andes; another laboured under the shadow of Mount Pelion—the mountain which the fabled giants piled up on Ossa in order to scale Olympus. They retraced the footsteps of St. Paul; they spread the Gospel in Jerusalem, where (as Saul) he persecuted the Church; on the road to Damascus, where he was apprehended of Christ Jesus; in Antioch, where he was commissioned by the Church; in Seleucia, whence he sailed on his first missionary journey; in Paphos, where the proconsul believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord; in Athens, where he preached on Mars' Hill; in Crete, under whose lee he sailed; in Syracuse, where he tarried three days; in Rome, whence he passed into the saints' everlasting rest.

In Perils among their Countrymen.

The romance of the Indian Post Office is the story of the mail-runners. Not a year passes that does not take its toll from the ranks of these men. Tigers, swollen rivers, avalanches in the Himalayas, gangs of robbers, all these stand in their way; but the work goes on; the mail is carried whatever happens. In the same way the romance of the Bible Society is largely the story of its colporteurs. Last year one of them in Western China was blown away in a gale and never seen again. A large part of the Society's work, it must be remembered, is done in unhealthy climates, amid conditions unfavourable alike to Europeans and natives. Listen to what the Rev. W. H.

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Rainey says about the ten men who work in Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador :—

“Some labour in the cold regions of the Andes, trudging across the bleak plateaux with a pack of books on their back. Others cross the tropical plains on horseback or in carts, and call at the little homesteads by the way. The fierce sun beats down on them by day ; the mosquito devours them by night ; the food is of the poorest ; their drink is frequently water from stagnant pools. But undaunted they cry, ‘On, on!’ for the utmost corners of their land must hear the message of the Book. Others, again, travel on the mighty rivers—the Orinoco, the Magdalena, and the Guayas—in small steamers or dug-out canoes, exposed to fierce sun and heavy rains. People live here who, forgotten by Church and State, depend on the colporteur for spiritual ministration, and who, even when they are themselves illiterate, love to listen to the greatest story that ever was told, as it is read by one of their countrymen. To be successful under these circumstances, spiritual and physical strength is absolutely necessary. The hardships of travel and the long absences from home are not bearable when any motive other than the highest inspires the soul. None but the strongest can carry a pack of books all day in the tropics and talk volubly at every door. Moreover, these countries are not a health resort ; in salubrity parts of them compare unfavourably with the West Coast of Africa. Sickness is the greatest obstacle to our work. Owing principally to malarial fever our ten colporteurs did only the work of six in 1922 ; in other words, on an average each man lost two-fifths of his time through sickness. One man had to retire through ill-health ; another died after only a month of service.”

But the colporteur encounters more bitter foes than mosquitoes. “In general”—such is the sad reflection of a French colporteur—“the human heart is bad, and if anyone accuses me of exaggeration, let him take a bagful of Scriptures and go alone to attack the strongholds of Satan and keep it up through long years.” “There are still places in this city,” writes an Italian colporteur, “where they throw things at

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me." Last year a Portuguese Bibleman reported that he had shaved off his beard because he was weary of having it pulled so frequently! The men who ventured to spread the Gospel of Peace in the Azores and in the Pasto district of Colombia—some of the most fanatical regions on earth—were severely maltreated and narrowly escaped with their lives. In a Malay village a colporteur was threatened with violence if he did not leave; he replied that there were people there who wanted books, and he would not go till he had done his duty. Thereupon one of the men picked up a bar of iron and struck him savagely on the head. Within the past three years three of our Chinese colporteurs have disappeared. They went out into lawless districts with their bundles of books, and all inquiries as to their fate have been fruitless.

"Only those who have tried it," says one of our secretaries in India, "know how very difficult it is to sell the Scriptures in a land like India. Many, it is true, eagerly purchase copies, some out of curiosity, others with a real desire to know more about the Christian religion; but opposition is still often experienced. The followers of Gandhi will often forbid the people to buy the colporteur's Scriptures, and will even get hold of copies and tear them in pieces before his eyes. But in spite of all such discouragements the colporteur goes steadily on, day by day sowing the good seed of the Gospel."

Quick-witted Men.

In meeting opposition, a ready tongue, quick wit, and a gracious manner are part of the colporteur's equipment. He needs to be a man of address to meet objections and to win the attention of the people to whom he offers the Book.

A Japanese colporteur on entering a garden was taken for the postman. "Where does the letter come from?" the housewife called to him. He answered: "I bring you good

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news of your Heavenly Father." "A letter from heaven!" exclaimed the woman; "tell me what is written in it." "It is written that the Son of God came to live and die that you might enjoy eternal life." The woman bought the Gospel and said: "Thank you for coming. I will read the book carefully. You have indeed brought me wonderful news."

Another Japanese colporteur said to a man: "God's words are written in these books, and if you receive them into your heart you will become a good man." "Oh no," replied the man, "one who lives in a stinking atmosphere cannot be free from odour." "No, sir, you see, fishes live in the salty sea, yet they are not salty." The man laughed, and purchased a Testament, promising to read it.

In France, during the elections, a colporteur was mistaken for an electioneering agent. "Which candidate do you come for?" he was asked as he approached a crowd with his little books. "For the best candidate of all," he replied; "One whom you have not thought about; but before I tell you His name, here is His programme: Love, Justice and Truth." "What is His name, then?" they asked. "His programme is all set out in these little books," said the colporteur, "and if you want to know Him, buy them. He is Jesus Christ."

One man in Portugal had some difficulty in selling his books in a fair because people said they were false. So he bought a lot of matches and placed them upon his stall. People would not buy Bibles, but they were eager to buy matches. "They are not for sale," he said. "Not for sale? What are they for, then?" A crowd had collected. "They are to burn these Bibles with," replied the colporteur, "as soon as any man can prove that they are false." That settled it.

The Word Welcomed.

Far from being everywhere rejected and maltreated, the colporteurs are very frequently hailed as angels of light by people conscious of spiritual need. "Please tell me how you became a Christian," said a Japanese lady to a colporteur, "for I think God sent you here to-day, and my heart is hungry for religion."

Sometimes, indeed, colporteurs do not have to search for customers: people seek them out, or they meet

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people who have been looking for the Bible for long years. When one of the Biblemen in Rumania was about to enter a train he heard a woman calling: "Testament! Testament!" She came running and eagerly bought a Testament, explaining that for six years she had been looking for one and had now been anxious lest she should lose the opportunity of buying it. In another Rumanian town the same man was told by a servant girl that she had been waiting five whole years for a colporteur to come. Another day he came across a man who had travelled twenty-five miles to a large town where he spent the whole day searching for a Testament.

A Persian colporteur writes: "At Rud Khaneh Duzdi I sold a Bible and some portions, and held conversation with the people. From there we travelled three-and-a-half *farsangs* (ten miles) and stayed for the night in a wood. Very early in the morning, before the sun had risen, a man came and said he had just arrived from Rud Khaneh Duzdi and wanted a Bible. He said: 'I read some chapters from the Bible you sold my friend, and I wanted one for myself as I liked the words so much.' As soon as he received the Book he set off walking the ten miles back."

Another Persian colporteur writes: "A man from the village of S. hearing that we were at M., came to us there and said: 'In my village there is a *mullah* (a Moslem learned in the sacred law) who has a large Persian Bible which he often reads, and sometimes passes on to us what he has read. We all love the words of that book. I want one like it.'"

Among the Vendangeurs.

During the joyous season of vintage last autumn in France, Colporteur Rousseau encountered a troop of grape-gatherers eating their dinner seated on the green grass. He saluted them jovially, and after some conversation about their work and the richness of the harvest he exhibited his books. A religious

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conversation followed. Then a girl sang, and the colporteur followed with a hymn which is always popular with French people :—

*“ Qui dit au soleil sur la terre
D’éclairer tout homme en tout lieu,
Et qui donne aux nuits leur mystère ?
C’est l’Eternel, c’est notre Dieu.”*

The *vendangeurs* clapped their hands and asked for more, so he sang the song of the Vaudois colporteur, which relates how a beautiful and noble lady found the Pearl of Great Price in the Gospel. This song touched them deeply. Three of them bought Testaments.

In Abyssinia.

If from France we pass to Abyssinia we shall find the same Book and the same work. Our colporteur in Addis Abbaba, the capital, is an Amhara, that is to say, a member of the old ruling tribe. For these tribesmen any kind of commerce is beneath their dignity; and as for playing the pedlar—no ordinary Amhara would entertain the idea for a moment. Yet Woldo Semyat squats, native fashion, in a prominent corner of the market-place with his bagful of the Scriptures—always choosing the same position so that it may come to be known as his. In that motley assembly he is conspicuous for his personal cleanliness. When there is no market he goes from door to door. Many Indians have settled in Addis Abbaba as general merchants and skilled artisans, and these naturally are attracted by books printed in India and in their own tongues. Last year Woldo Semyat sold copies of the Scriptures in about a dozen languages—Amharic, Ethiopic, Gujarati, Urdu, Modern Greek, Ancient Greek, Arabic, Armenian, French, Hebrew and Hindi.

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On the Witwatersrand.

If now we cross to the other end of Africa, we shall catch a glimpse of a Bible Society colporteur at work among the natives in the goldmines of Johannesburg.

Mr. Stephen says: "When taking up work as a colporteur for the British and Foreign Bible Society on the Rand I thought I knew something of the spiritual need of the natives. Now I find that my knowledge was only scant and superficial. Not until I came into direct contact with these thousands of natives, representing nearly all the tribes from the southern extremity of the Cape to the far-away countries north of the Zambezi, did I realize what it meant, and now I find that I am only beginning to know.

"Our opportunities are threefold. We must facilitate the progress of the natives in their desire to learn to read. Multitudes of them do not know a single letter. They have marvellous patience, and by the help of friends eventually master the spelling-book and pass on to the more difficult Standard Readers. In all this struggle they have one object, to be able to read the Bible or Testament in their own language, and, generally speaking, before the native has finished his labour contract he has purchased his New Testament or complete Bible, which becomes the most treasured possession he carries with him to his distant home in the interior.

"During this period of learning to read, the native is brought under the influence of earnest evangelistic effort, and not infrequently he has obtained the all-essential knowledge of Jesus Christ as Saviour long before he has learnt to read.

"The colporteur has also a great opportunity of helping believers and in explaining to them many difficulties which arise. The life of the Christian native on the Rand is surrounded by temptations of the gravest character. In our direct intercourse with them we learn their difficulties, and are always able to encourage them in their fight against sin, and to lead them to the source of Divine strength. There can hardly be imagined a sphere of greater usefulness in the Master's service than that of the Bible Society colporteur in Johannesburg."

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The Bible as Missionary.

The Archbishop of Melbourne said at the meeting of our Society in that city on March 12th, 1923 :—

“ Here to-night, believing as we do with all our hearts in the House of God and the sacred ministry of His Church, I wish to say that where no man can go the Book can go, and the Book can go to a hundred places where one man can only go to a few, and we are out to push the circulation of the Book all we can.”

An eloquent commentary on this is afforded by the labours of Colporteur Feng in Western China, on the borders of Tibet.

There is a tremendous number of Tibetans in the district. To the north are the famous Lamaseries of Kholmangsi, Chohtsangsi, and Tientangsi, and many smaller ones. To the south is the Kueitching and Paicnrong district, which takes in the world-wide famous Lamasery of Kumbum, where there are some 3,600 resident priests. To the east is the Nienpehhsien district, including the Tsutansi Lamasery and others. To the west is the district of Dangar, and Kokonor, which district is indeed huge as it includes about one-third of Tibet itself. Mr. Feng's work is to cover the whole of this ground, and this he is doing very faithfully. He has about 3,000 books and portions in his pack, and with this on his shoulder he sets out on his round, not coming back until his stock of books is sold. In the course of a year, a very large number of books is sold in the Tibetan language, and these books are taken into far interior Tibet where the missionary or colporteur cannot possibly go. It is very marked how the attitude of the Tibetans is changing, and especially so during the past three or four years. Whereas in former years they would not accept a Gospel even as a gift, now they are willing to pay for one.

The Bridge Sisterhood.

Space alone prevents our dwelling at length upon the labours of the faithful Biblewomen, who in Eastern lands carry the Gospel where no man may penetrate. In Korea last year eleven of these women sold 21,542

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volumes, read to 24,916 women, and taught 1,075 to read. Of one of them it is said that it is no very uncommon thing for her to bring home the paraphernalia of a sorceress whom she has led to the Saviour. Since her appointment she has led at least twenty of these witches to Christ. One sorceress, who had plied her unholy trade for thirty-eight years, has been appointed as a Biblewoman in one of the city churches.

Way-makers for the Missionary.

In non-Christian countries the Bible Society's colporteurs act as pioneers, blazers of the trail—pushing out into the regions beyond, selling and explaining the Scriptures, and thus preparing the way for the evangelist and pastor. Churches spring up in the footsteps of these devoted men, who lead many a soul to Christ.

The Rev. L. C. Whitelaw, of the China Inland Mission, Tsinchow, writes : " At our baptisms in August, when fifty-six were received and baptized, six testified that your colporteurs had led them to make a decision for Christ."

The Rev. F. A. Christopherson, of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Nanning, China, writes : " We praise God for Mr. Tsoi, the colporteur, and for his earnestness in the work. Ten men were baptized at Panchow recently, and there are several inquirers. This is necessarily the colporteur's work, as he alone gets in touch with inquirers through the sale and study of the little books."

From the Rev. J. A. Rinell, of the Swedish Baptist Mission, Kiaochow, China, we received this testimony : " Some years ago Colporteur Len sold some Bible portions to three Chinese gentlemen who lived in one of the many villages a few miles from Kiaochow city. One of the purchasers was a silversmith, one a merchant, and the other a school teacher. It pleased God to open the heart of these gentlemen for the heavenly message and to use them to tell the Old, Old Story to their kindred and neighbours, with the result that in that very place to-day is a Church counting 239 members."

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The Rev. F. S. Miller, a missionary in Korea, tells of a colporteur named Si Chung, who, far away among the mountains of that country, worked up a little group into a Christian community with a church building.

The colporteur is also a valuable aid to the missionary in helping to keep in touch with scattered Christians. This aspect is spoken of, among others, by the Rev. T. S. Soltau, of Korea : "The last month or two Ham Young Moon has brought back word of isolated believers of whom I was ignorant, and so has enabled me to get in touch with them."

The following is taken from *St. Andrew's Outlook*, the Quarterly Messenger of the Presbyterian Churches in Malaya :—

"Recently in a village in the Muar district, twenty-seven men were received into the Church by baptism, and it is interesting to note that they were Hylams, generally supposed to be the most difficult of Chinese to evangelize. The way had been prepared by our colporteur who sold the Scriptures in the district. His work was followed up by visits from our preacher and other workers from Muar. The villagers who welcomed the Word rented a shop-house of their own accord, and set it apart as a place of worship. They then sought instruction with a view to baptism. The service at which they were received into the Church was a memorable one, and crowds of villagers thronged inside and outside the building, following the proceedings with rapt attention."

The colporteur in question was one of those supported by the Bible Society.

PEOPLE WHO PASS OVER

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*"Ye that from south to north,
Ye that from east to west,
Stretch hands of longing forth
And keep your eyes from rest,
Lo, when ye will, we bring you gifts of what is best.*

*Rise, ere the dawn be risen ;
Come and be all souls fed ;
From field and street and prison,
Come, for the feast is spread ;
Live, for the truth is living ; wake, for night is dead."*
SWINBURNE, "A Marching Song."

THE traveller in Italy cannot but have his imagination fired as he pauses upon the Ponte St. Angelo, the bridge that crosses the Tiber in the direction of St. Peter's. Much of the history of the Eternal City has clustered around it since it was built early in the second century of our era by Hadrian—the emperor who also built the wall from the Tyne to the Solway. Emperors and Kings and Popes have passed over it—warriors of many nationalities, pilgrims from the ends of the earth, ambassadors of peace and war, messengers bearing missives which have convulsed Christendom. Its gutters have run with blood; conspirators and martyrs have hung there; chants sung by pious multitudes have ascended to heaven from it. And still people pass over.

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A man once spent a week's holiday on London Bridge and wrote an account of what he saw. This reminds us of Longfellow's well-known poem in which he recalls to mind the people who had passed over the bridge where he stood at midnight.

“I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro :
The young heart hot and restless
And the old subdued and slow ! ”

Who can watch unmoved that endless march ? The opulent in their carriages, the beggar in his rags ; the joyous wedding, the slow-moving funeral procession ; men and women of every rank and condition, each with his passion and pain ; some jubilant with hope, some with desperate anguish tearing their hearts ; some flushed with victory, others so harassed by misfortune that they look longingly over the parapet, where in the dark waters below they might seek oblivion : so they pass, a crowd that in its mingled joy and sorrow is an epitome of mankind.

Those who pass over the Gospel bridge are a great multitude, which no man can number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues. They sing a new song. Joy fills their hearts. For this is *a way for the redeemed to pass over.*

The Word of God is Quick and Powerful.

The Bible Society never claims that all the millions of copies of the Scriptures which it issues are studied—that the truth they contain is all assimilated and put into practice. Some of them are destroyed, some are placed upon the shelf and neglected. While this is so, the Society goes on accumulating evidence from all parts of the world of the kindling and illuminating power of the Holy Scriptures—proof that the Bible

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is inspired, since it continues to inspire men to holier living.

In the first chapter of his striking book, *Conversion, Catholicism and the English Church*, the Bishop of Bloemfontein expounds three causes of conversion, namely: (1) the action of God, (2) the witness of living agents—the Church and godly people, (3) the witness of the written Word. “I believe,” he says, “that a steady reading and study of the Gospels is a cause of conversion, perhaps the most powerful in the world.” All conversion is of God, Who willeth that all men should turn to Him and be saved. He works through His servants—ministers and evangelists and colporteurs and Christians generally who bear no office; and He speaks to men through the pages of His Holy Word. In this chapter we offer some illustrations of this truth from the Bible Society’s latest report.

The Bible finds Men.

All over the world there are men dragging out wretched existences in anguish of mind—sick in body and soul. They may present a brave face to the world, but the heart knoweth its own bitterness. To many of these come the Bible-sellers with the written message of the great Lover of souls, the Source of all comfort. The Book that appeals to broken hearts never lacks a constituency.

A Japanese colporteur called last year at the residence of a doctor, and, finding there some young men and women, exhorted them to read the Scriptures. His words were at first received with indifference; but when he went on to say that just as a doctor is necessary for the healing of bodily disease, so a heavenly physician is necessary to cure the soul, the doctor’s wife answered: “It is true—quite true. A doctor,

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however skilful he may be, can do nothing for the troubles of the heart. If you have news of one who can, by all means let me have one of your books."

"Tell us," said one of two men whom a colporteur overtook on a road in Egypt, "tell us where to find the book which leads to God and teaches of Christ."

A Persian said to a colporteur: "Of a truth the words of the *Injil* (Gospel) are comforting—'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' This book speaks to my heart words that I understand."

In Algeria a colporteur entered a shoemaker's shop, and, by invitation, read to the workmen the Parable of the Prodigal Son. "I remember hearing something like that years ago in a Protestant church," said one of the men. This led to a talk that brought back old longings and desires. Tears ran down the man's cheeks as he bought a Bible and said: "I shall read in this book over again the story of God's love and of the Saviour."

In Burma the colporteurs often find it difficult in these days to steer clear of political discussion, but they confine themselves to their legitimate work of distributing the Scriptures and giving simple explanations of the difficulties which arise in the minds of readers, many of whom, for the first time in their experience, are brought face to face with a new theory of life. From time to time a man is met with, to whom the new religion comes, not as a strange, weird puzzle, but as a solution of the intellectual or spiritual difficulties with which he has himself been wrestling. So confesses a recent convert brought to a knowledge of the Truth through reading St. John's Gospel.

"When I read those wonderful words in John iii. 16, 'God so loved the world,' it seemed to me that all the difficulties I

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had felt about *Karma* (fate), retribution, sin and punishment vanished—all being swallowed up in the abyss of Divine Love.”

To another Burman it was the mystery of the Cross of Christ which appealed with irresistible power, while to a third the clear teaching of the Scriptures in regard to Eternal Life, in contrast with the Buddhist maze of doctrine on the subject of reincarnation, appealed directly both to his intellect and his heart.

Lo, God is here!

A lady writes from Valparaiso, the capital of Chile:—

“ One day I was asked to visit an old woman living in one of the poorest districts of the city, not very far from what is known as *La Boca del infierno* (‘ the mouth of hell ’). After scrambling up some slippery steps and winding my way along muddy, tortuous passages, I at last found the house. Here was a pathetic sight: an old woman with what had once been a refined face, living in dire poverty without even a mattress or a blanket on her bed. I had brought some food for her. I looked round to see if there was anything like a book in the house, but there was not such a thing. I drew from my pocket a New Testament and asked whether she knew what book it was. She recognized it and took it in her hands and kissed it, saying: ‘ It is years since I saw it.’ I read to her several passages and reminded her that Jesus Christ, Who was rich, for our sakes became poor, and that this Book was part of His gracious legacy to us, and that through it the voice of God speaks to our soul. She was very grateful as I placed the book in her hands, and with much feeling she said: ‘ Surely God is in this place!’ ”

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"El Jesus Natural."

It is always interesting to know what part of the Bible appeals to men. In Western Europe, our agents say, some are captured by the music of the Psalms, others by the beautiful old stories, others by the wisdom of Proverbs. Above all, it is the authentic portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels that makes an irresistible appeal. It must be remembered that what a well-known Roman Catholic writer said of his French fellow-countrymen is in general true about other peoples of Western Europe: "The Christ is almost unknown among them." The Child in His Mother's arms, the terrible Judge of the Sistine chapel, the pitiful Figure of the Crucifix, one of the numerous *Cristos* that have their place among the patron saints—yes, but not the Lord of Life and Thought. Him they learn to know in the pages of the New Testament. Many people, to whom the Christ of the Gospels comes with the shock of a glad surprise, would echo the sentiment expressed by a Spaniard: *Me gusta el Jesus natural, no mortificado como lo presenta el clero* ("What delights me is the life-like Jesus, not the figure devoid of all vitality presented by the clergy"). Even in many circles where organized religion is suspected and hated, Christ is, in some measure, revered. One hears of Socialist clubs where His portrait hangs encircled by laurel. The New Testament is purchased for the library of many of these clubs. It is an incomplete faith, maybe, but it surely bears a promise for the future.

An Echo of the War.

As an illustration of the far-reaching effects of the Great War, as well as of the wonderful leading of God

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in the work of colportage, the following may be quoted :—

From Monywa, in Burma, there went on active service in Palestine a police constable who had enlisted in a Burmese regiment. He was a Buddhist. During his term of service he visited Jerusalem and the Holy places. On his return to Burma he fell sick and entered the local civil hospital. Our colporteur was about that time bitten by a dog, and also went to the hospital for treatment. He carried the Scriptures with him, and spoke of them to the police constable, who at once bought a Burmese Gospel and began to read. As he read, he came upon the names of places he had seen, and was especially impressed by the stories of the Cross and the open Sepulchre. He declared confidently : “ This book is true ; I have seen with my own eyes the place of the Cross and the empty Tomb. I must believe what this book says, for it is true.” The colporteur began to instruct him at once, and after leaving hospital, the constable was regularly taught by the colporteur and the catechists. He found his way from the Christ of history to the Christ of experience, and was baptized on Christmas Day, but not alone, for he brought with him a friend whose interest he had awakened, whose hunger he had helped to satisfy. Through him there are two other constables now seriously considering the claims of Christ, and so the Good News spreads in ever-widening circles.

By Devious Paths.

Some people who ultimately cross the Bridge, set out on their journey inspired by dubious motives, and travel by strange ways. The thing that matters, however, is that they arrive and pass over.

In the Shantung province of China, a tinsmith bought

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some Gospels from a colporteur. They were lying on his bench, when a friend named Lin entered. Mr. Lin picked up the books and examined them; he was so attracted by them that he tried to induce the tinsmith to part with them. In vain; the owner would not give up his treasure. When Mr. Lin was about to leave, he quietly put the books into his wide sleeve without his friend detecting the theft. He will thief no more; the reading of the Gospels has changed his heart; he has confessed himself a believer, and daily prays in his house.

The Rev. J. Duthie, of Hada, North Chihli, China, sends the following interesting story. Those who remember Gilmour's austere and almost saintly character will appreciate the grim humour of the situation.

"There is one Christian in the district who tells an amusing tale which illustrates how God can use His own word in the conversion of sinners. This man was formerly an inveterate gambler. At that time the late James Gilmour, of the L.M.S., was living in Chaoyang. This man heard that Gilmour was a clever gambler, and made up his mind that he would go to him and learn some of the tricks of the trade! When he got to the inn he found Gilmour was out. He told the native helper what he had heard and what he had come for. The native quietly replied that he could supply Gilmour's teaching in book form and handed him a copy of the Gospel of Luke! He went home and read it with avidity. He soon learned there was nothing in it about gambling, but the book got hold of him, and when he went to see Gilmour again it was as a humble inquirer. This man still stands to-day a testimony to the power of the Word of God."

• In Genoa, an Italian confessed to a colporteur that one day, being in a crowd on the station platform, he picked a gentleman's pocket of what he thought was a portfolio; but when he got home his prize proved to be a book—a book entitled "The Gospel of St. John." He read it, and determined to steal no more, but to put into practice what he had read:

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Torn Pages.

The romance of torn pages has yet to be written. No part of the Bible Society's record is more fascinating than the story of how scraps of the Gospel, discarded volumes, have led men on towards the Truth.

Last summer, at a country village in South Italy, a colporteur came upon some people who had been taking a siesta in the open air and he invited them to purchase the Scriptures. "Wait a moment," said one man, and running to a house near by, he returned quickly with three little books, sadly mutilated and very dirty. "I am a scavenger," he explained, "and go regularly to Naples to collect refuse. I sort it out here, and sometimes find things worth keeping. One day I found three pearls. Here they are--these three torn books. I read them out of curiosity, and they so moved me that I wept. I told my family about them and read passages to them. Now I shall take the Bible and we shall be still happier." He and his companions pressed the colporteur to dine with them, and when he hesitated they said: "Let it be so, and may it be taken as if we had done it to Jesus" (*Noi facciamo ciò e vale se l'avessimo fatto a Gesu*). As much as to say, We cannot entertain the King, but we will honour His ambassador. These men saw clearly. The humble Bible-seller is an ambassador of Christ, delivering the message of the boundless mercy of God.

A Jew entered one of our depots in Persia with a piece of torn paper on which were words in Hebrew character. He asked for a book in which the words on the paper were contained. Our Agent asked him to translate into Arabic the words on the paper. They were: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." When asked where he got the paper, he replied: "I picked it up from the ground, for I saw it was in Hebrew type, and when I read the words there came a great longing to get the whole book. I asked a Jewish friend where the book could be found, and he told me to come here." He rejoiced greatly when he obtained a Hebrew New Testament with references.

At a men's Sunday-school class in Bolivia testimonies were given by the members who had made a definite decision for Christ during the year. One young fellow related that, while

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sweeping out an unused room in the house where he worked he came upon a little book--St. Mark's Gospel. He read it, and its message crept into his heart. That was how he was led to the Truth. What one person rejects as useless, another finds to be the Gate of Heaven.

At Shanghai a dog entered the compound of Dr. Mary Stone's hospital, which stands near the arsenal; and while rummaging in the yard for scraps, he came upon part of an old book, which he carried away in his mouth to a camp of Chinese soldiers near by. These soldiers were curious to discover what it was that the dog was carrying, and began to read the printed pages. The book proved to be a portion of the Old Testament in Chinese. The men grew very interested in the stories which it contained, and when they found that it was imperfect, they guessed that it had come from the compound near by, and sent to Dr. Mary Stone, asking for a complete copy. Dr. Stone provided them with several Bibles, but these were not sufficient to satisfy the soldiers, who sent a second and a third time for more of the books. The result was that a number of these soldiers attended the mission services held in the compound, and became deeply interested in the Gospel. Dr. Stone then invited the Rev. Dr. Goforth, of Kikungshan, Honan, who happened to be in Shanghai, to hold a series of evangelistic meetings especially for the soldiers' benefit. As a result of these meetings, 140 New Testaments were procured by the soldiers.

There was point, then, in what an Italian colporteur told the wife of a fishmonger who said that the only use she had for a Bible was to wrap up sardines in its leaves. He thanked her. "You are carrying on a fine propaganda," he said, "for every person that comes here to buy sardines carries away a message from God!"

The two Great Lights.

Here is another true story from China:—

• "Some twenty years ago there came from the country, forty miles distant, a young apprentice to the city of Nanchang. During his sojourn there he heard the Gospel, which fell unheeded on his careless ears. Six years later found him in Lingchow,

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an assistant in a business, but a confirmed gambler. One day, rummaging amongst the rubbish lying under his bed in the loft he came across a discarded Bible. Opening it he began to read at Genesis i, and became at once deeply interested in the mention of the two great lights (verse 16). Just before his father died he had requested this (his elder) son to read from a Chinese book which enlarges on the power, glories and marvellous excellences of the sun. It is believed that by chanting from this book it is possible to receive forgiveness of sins and open the gates of hell. Reading in the Scriptures about the creation of these lights brought vividly back to his memory the scene at his father's deathbed, and he thought if this God had power to create those lights what a wonderful God He must be. From that day he began to read and re-read the story. His companions laughed at him, calling him a 'god.' Not long after, a Chinese colporteur visited that district and some chaffingly said to him: 'Another god has come; you had better go and see him.' "

"They met and Mr. Li, our colporteur, greatly helped him by explaining simply the way of salvation as revealed in the New Testament, exhorting him to continue in the reading of the Scriptures and prayer. He took this excellent advice and became such a changed man that the people said: 'He is mad.' His widowed mother wrote beseeching him to have nothing to do with this new doctrine, adding, 'How is it that you, a man with such little courage that you even fear the leaves falling on your head may break it, can believe in such a thing as this?' He replied: 'The doctrine I believe in is that the Lord Jesus Christ is able to forgive my sins.'

"The mother had no peace of heart, so wrote telling the son to return home and set up in business with his younger brother. About a year passed when one day a man arrived at the home and the son was told: 'Here is someone selling books.' Out he went and to his joy found a colporteur selling the Scriptures -- he had come from the Juichowfu Gospel tent which was pitched about two miles away.

"To-day in that country home we find the mother a most devoted follower of the Lord Jesus, the elder son continuing to grow in grace and in knowledge, and the younger son joyful in the Lord. The wives of both sons have also been baptized and take their place at the Lord's Table. The family altar is set up, and evening by evening straw mats are brought out, each member of the three generations kneels and one by one they pour out their

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hearts in praise and gratitude to God for the mercies of the day. Many of the neighbours are also rejoicing in God their Saviour, and a suitable hall for preaching and worship has recently been erected on land given by the family."

The Experiences of Two Colporteurs.

Some of our Bible-sellers trace their own conversion either to some winged word of Scripture read to them by others, or to their own reading and meditation upon it in solitude.

One of them stumbled, half intoxicated and unconscious of where he was going, into a Salvation Army meeting in an Italian city. He remembers only one thing of what he heard and saw. The hymns, the prayers, the sermon left no impression upon his mind. But as he entered, a verse from the Bible, read by the Army officer, struck to his conscience: "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness." The very passage that flooded St. Augustine's soul with light after hearing the voice: *Tolle, lege* ("Take up and read"). Now this man sells the Scriptures. At first he shrank from reappearing in the haunts of his unregenerate days. "But in this piazza," he then said to himself, "I served the devil and was not ashamed to be drunk and to blaspheme in the hearing of men; I will not be less courageous in the Lord's service." He sold six thousand volumes in 1922, including four hundred complete Bibles.

A French colporteur was brought up in a godly home. His parents at one time possessed a Bible, but it was stolen from them. The thief, disobeying his confessor who told him to burn it, threw the Bible down a deep well. His conscience so troubled him that he went afterwards to recover the book, but was unable to find it. The family never saw the precious Bible again, but often spoke of it to their son and aroused in him a desire to possess one like it. The lad grew into manhood without succeeding in his quest. Then, while he was working away from home,

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he noticed that a fellow-lodger made a practice of reading from a book every morning and discovered it to be the New Testament. Too shy to borrow it, he used to watch his companion in the hope that he would leave it behind when he went out in the morning, but day after day a bulge in the young man's jacket showed that it was in his pocket. One Sunday morning, as his friend passed out, he noticed that there was no bulge. Hurrah! the Testament must be in the house. He ascended to the bedroom and searched--searched long and in vain, until finally it occurred to him to look under the mattress, and there he found the book. He sat him down to read, and read all that day. It was the turning-point of his life. Though brought up piously, he had wandered far from his parents' faith. He dates his conversion from that Sunday when he first read the New Testament, and now for twenty years he has been spreading abroad the Book which brought him back to God.

We close this chapter with a little-known poem of Thomas Hood on the Bible.

“Oh, that the vacant eye would learn to look
On very beauty, and the heart embrace
True loveliness; and from this Holy Book
Drink the warm-breathing tenderness and grace
Of Love indeed! Oh, that the young soul took
Its virgin passion from the glorious face
Of fair religion, and addressed its strife
To win the riches of Eternal Life!”

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GIFTS FOR THE BRIDGE

“ The King to the Archbishops, etc., greeting. . . . And we also desire of you that when the aforesaid Brethren, or their Messengers, shall come to you for your alms for their support, or for that of the aforesaid bridge, ye shall courteously receive them and cause them to be so received in all your Churches, Towns and Courts; and that ye will bestow upon them of your goods according to your charity, and the sight of our precept, the alms which they desire.”

KING HENRY III'S PROTECTION FOR THE
BRETHREN OF LONDON BRIDGE, 1252.

IN Anglo-Saxon times all freeholders in England were subject to three obligations, one of which was termed *bryc-geweorc*, the construction and reparation of bridges. Later, as we saw in a previous chapter, this obligation was assumed largely, if not entirely, by the Church, and the building and repairing of bridges came to be looked upon as a pious duty. Part of the work of the Bridge Friars consisted in the collection of funds. People contributed or bequeathed money and lands, the value of which in those times represented substantial amounts. We read of one legacy, for example, of “ $1\frac{1}{2}$ rood of land near Horslesc held of the heirs of Thomas le Belvedere for the annual rent of one penny.” In the middle of the thirteenth century London Bridge derived a revenue of thirty pounds a year from quit-rents on donated lands. Bridges were built as a thanksgiving, especially for rescue from drowning; witness the bridge over the Lea at Bow erected by Matilda,

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Queen of Henry I. In the island of Foesoc, Denmark, a bridge was built at the cost of two or three persons to commemorate the name of Jothheimt, who converted them to Christianity. Tolls were levied on wayfarers who used the bridges—exemptions being given to such people as soldiers on the march, vagrants and prisoners—but these did not suffice to meet the expenses of upkeep; the main income was derived from the gifts of the pious.

Contributions.

Like the medieval Bridge-builders, the Bible Society depends mainly upon the free-will offerings of Christian people. Out of every sovereign received by the Society last year, 12s. 3d. represented gifts, and 7s. 9d. was derived from sales of the Scriptures. A considerable amount was derived from legacies—about £55,000; the remainder of the contributed income—about £170,000—was given in the form of collections, donations and subscriptions.

An examination of the Society's accounts reveals that while it received some princely donations, the great bulk of its revenue is made up of small sums. The Society exists primarily for the poor of this world; and the poor are its most generous supporters. One thing that hallows the Society's enterprise is that it rests, so far as finance is concerned, chiefly upon the gifts of those to whom giving spells self-denial.

It is an arresting fact that over £14,000 was received at the London Bible House last year from anonymous donors. One unknown friend sent £2,000; there were several gifts ranging from £100 to £1,000. For these we are very grateful, but it is items such as the following that go to the heart: "A working girl's mite, 2s. 6d."; "A poor widow, 10s. "; "For His sake, from

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an old hospital nurse, £1 ”; “ An unemployed brother, 10s.” One “ old-age pensioner ” sent 3s., another 10s.; two others £1. Many gifts came marked simply “ A Thankoffering ”; others, “ In Memoriam.” Quite a number were earmarked for specific objects, such as colportage or for the Scriptures in a particular country.

A touching gift came from an old lady of seventy-eight, who lives in lodgings with her sister aged eighty-two. They contrive to exist partly by the help of their old-age pensions and partly by the proceeds of a little needlework. Last October the younger sister sold a piece of furniture which she possessed, valued at £15; she promptly sent one half to the missionary society of her Church and the other half to the Bible Society.

Many people, in these stressful times, cannot afford to contribute out of their slender income, but they take opportunities of earning a little extra in order that God’s work may go forward. One lady sent £5 which she earned by attending sick and injured animals; two Cornish fishermen each made a special crab-pot and sent the proceeds of the crabs thus caught, £3 16s. 6d.

By far the greater part of the Society’s income is collected by its Auxiliaries in various countries. If there is one body of workers on the Bridge that deserves special credit, it surely is the corps of Collectors, the women and children especially who labour year in, year out, gathering subscriptions. Without their unostentatious services, the Brotherhood could not carry on.

It is thought by many people that ours is a rich Society. If they mean that it possesses large financial reserves, they are in error. But the Society is rich, rich beyond the dreams of avarice, rich beyond all human calculation, in the devotion and generous impulses of its multitudes of friends and supporters.

At Headquarters we do not know as much as we

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should like to know of the gifts that come from our friends overseas ; but we know enough to realize that they represent self-denial in hundreds of homes. We cannot too warmly express our appreciation of the splendid sums raised in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. And if there be one class of contribution that we value more than any other, it is the money that comes from those of other races than our own who have learnt to love the Lord Jesus Christ through the labours of missionaries and through the Bible.

A Tamil Christian came into the Bible Society's depot at Kuala Lumpur bringing a box which he asked our agent to open. It was somewhat heavy, and Mr. Williams thought it would be full of copper coins, but when he opened it a shower of silver fell out, which in English currency amounted in value to £3 8s. 8d. The man had denied himself tea and coffee to be able to save up that sum for the Society. During Lent last year some poor lepers in India put aside daily a small portion of their food, a few potatoes or a pinch of wheat or rice and lentils : these were sold at market rates, and the proceeds divided between our Society and the Bishop in Jerusalem's Fund. A little Dutch girl wrote to our Secretary in Cape Town : " I am sending you 12s. 8d. for your work : one penny comes from Kaatje, who is our little Kafir girl. She says she also wants to help you bring the knowledge of dear Jesus to other black-skins." The same little Kafir girl, whose wages were but a few shillings a month, sent four shillings subsequently. The Tamil Christian Sisters' Union, which represents Indian, Ceylonese and Tamil Christian ladies in Penang, sent £24, the proceeds from a sale of work. Another welcome gift came from Naga Christians in India, " who are thankful for the interest shown by the Bible Society in them, and wish every blessing on its efforts to give the written Word to the nations." A French missionary forwarded 500 *francs* from the native Christians in Tahiti, " who are happy to bear witness to their gratitude for the blessed work which the Bible Society is doing in the world." The African Churches connected with the Church of Scotland Mission in Nyasaland collected £17 14s. 10d. for the Society last year.

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These are but a few examples of the gifts which reached us from the mission fields. When we remember the poverty of the givers and recall how new a thing in the lives of the natives it is to contribute money in this way, our gratitude cannot be measured in words—not for the amounts merely, but for the evidence they provide that the donors are showing the graces of Christian giving.

Income from Sales.

Looked at from one point of view, the Society is a vast publishing concern. In 119 years it has issued over 336,000,000 printed volumes, and last year it sent out 8,679,384 volumes, each containing at least a complete book of the Bible. It might well claim to be the greatest seller of books the world has ever known. What distinguishes the Bible Society, however, from all commercial publishing houses is that it does not seek profits, and as a matter of fact the more books it sells the more money it loses. This is due to the missionary character of the Society, in that it sells most of its editions much below cost and, under special circumstances, gives away large numbers gratuitously. The Bible Society adopted the rule to sell the Scriptures rather than scatter them freely because people are more likely to read and preserve what they pay something for. In this policy missionaries abroad enthusiastically concur. But just as exemption from bridge-tolls was granted to vagrants, prisoners, soldiers on the march and others who could not be expected to pay, so the Society is always ready to grant the Scriptures free to those who are too poor to pay even the small prices which it charges.

Everybody knows how prices of books have mounted since the war. Like all other publishing houses, the

GIFTS FOR THE BRIDGE

Bible Society is still compelled to pay considerably more than it used to pay for paper and for printing and binding books. The Society has had to raise its selling-prices, but it still loses as much as—in most cases it loses much more than—it lost upon the books when they were cheaper. It used to lose over a penny on every copy of its “penny Testament”; the same book to-day is sold at twopence, but the Society loses twopence on each copy. What is true of the Society’s English editions is true also of the editions printed or sent abroad. It was able until recently to sell many thousands of Gospels in India at a farthing each; the price has now been raised to a halfpenny, and on every Gospel the Society is losing over a penny. A book of seventy pages, well printed in Bengali, on white paper and with a bright picture wrapper, is good value for a halfpenny anywhere. The Bible Society’s Gospel portions still hold pride of place as the cheapest books in the world. But it is only able to sell at these prices because Christian people contribute liberally to make up the loss.

It is hardly necessary to say that the Society in no way whatever encourages sweated labour in the production of cheap literature. Its editions are produced under conditions of labour which will bear the strictest investigation. In China—where the Society prints over 3,000,000 books a year—contracts are made only with firms who pledge themselves to observe the standards for industrial labour that have been laid down by the National Christian Conference.

Moreover, the Society makes grants of the Scriptures at reduced prices to missions abroad and to missions and philanthropic institutions in England and Wales. To many mission fields it sends out the Scriptures without charge to the Societies and is satisfied to receive such returns from sales as may be possible,

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the missionaries themselves setting a price they think their people can pay. In other fields large reductions from the catalogue price are made in favour of missionaries. The Society's agents are empowered to give a volume of Holy Scripture to any person who desires to read it and is incapable of paying for it. Many thousands of copies were distributed free last year to Russian refugees, to the sufferers from earthquakes, and to other needy persons. Over 7,000 Bibles or Testaments were presented to Indian University students last year.

The Society's Expenditure.

Last year the Society spent £360,781. Out of every sovereign, 11s. 3d. was spent on translation, revision, printing, binding and shipping; a further 5s. 8d. covered the cost of colportage and other expenses of distributing the Scriptures abroad; while 3s. 1d. went to meet all other necessary expenditure.

The Present Position.

The Committee are devoutly thankful to be able to report that the income last year was sufficient to meet the expenditure and leave a small surplus. But they must frankly point out to the Society's supporters that this result has only been attained by a stringent policy of retrenchment. This does not merely mean that unnecessary expenditure has been avoided. The Committee are all laymen with large experience in business and finance, and not only do they not allow the Society to run into debt, but they closely watch that no money shall ever be unnecessarily expended. The retrenchment of which we speak means that the Committee has not taken advantage of doors that have opened for further extension of the work. In almost every agency there are these possibili-

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ties of extension. It means, moreover, that the staff abroad has not been kept up to its pre-war strength.

To take one continent alone, the Society is to-day doing much less in Europe than it did before the war. Where it employed 240 colporteurs, there are now only 100. It is true that in 1913 seventy-three colporteurs were at work in Russia and Siberia, and that at present, owing to political conditions, we cannot employ one. When the opportunity allows we must be ready to enter those countries in full strength, and this will mean a very large expenditure. In 1913 we had fifty-eight colporteurs spreading the Gospel in Central Europe where in 1922 we had only two. In most of these Central European countries the doors stand widely and invitingly open for us to enter. Were the funds available, the Society could with advantage double its staff of colporteurs in Western and South-Eastern Europe.

From other parts of the Society's world-wide field there come calls for further translation and distribution of the Scriptures. The expansion of Christianity in the overseas mission fields is one of the most cheering aspects of the world-view to-day—perhaps it is the most cheering of all. Every convert gained, every new station opened, every new field occupied, means a fresh demand upon the Society's resources. Whatever else may be played out, the Bible is not ; more and more it is coming into its own. The Society is not doing as much work as it could do and ought to do. It is only doing as much as it can do within the limit of its income. The condition of the world to-day is a mighty challenge to the Christian Church, particularly to the Society that more than any other is responsible for the dissemination of the Gospel in written form. To all who have the Kingdom of God at heart, the Society appeals for help that with ampler hand it may spread abroad

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the Truth that makes men wise and free ; may build the Bridge which is the *way for the redeemed to pass over.*

“ I hope,” said Lord Parmoor at our last anniversary, “ I hope I may appeal to this great meeting and to outside Christians who are not present that they may come forward and help the British and Foreign Bible Society, not only to continue to carry out the work which it has been doing, but to go further and enable it to do that work which it cannot now do because of the limits of its income.”

THE COMMITTEE AIM AT RAISING THE ANNUAL INCOME OF THE SOCIETY TO £450,000, WHICH MEANS £83,000 MORE THAN WAS RECEIVED LAST YEAR.

* * * * *

L'ENVOI.

We may well take as a parable the following incident borrowed from Professor Angus Jones's new volume, *Spiritual Energies in Daily Life* :—

“ When the Hellgate Bridge was being built over the East River at New York, the engineers came upon an old derelict ship, lying embedded in the river mud, just where one of the central piers of the bridge was to go down through to its bedrock foundation. No tug-boat could be found that was able to start the derelict from its ancient bed in the ooze. . . . Finally, with a sudden inspiration, one of the workers hit upon this scheme. He took a large flat boat, which had been used to bring stone down the river, and he chained it to the old sunken ship when the tide was low. Then he waited for the great tidal energies to do their work. Slowly the rising tide, with all the forces of the ocean behind it, came up under the flat boat, raising it inch by inch. And as it came up, lifted by irresistible power, the derelict came up with it, until it was entirely out of the mud that had held it.”

‘ Brotherhood of the Bridge ! Let us all take it to heart : *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*

SUMMARY

NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 116, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. 4; also at the Society's Bankers, THE BANK OF ENGLAND, Threadneedle Street, E.C. 2. and WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C. 3;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques (*crossed on the Bank of England*), Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders (*on the General Post Office*) should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and addressed to the Secretaries.

Letters containing Orders for Books are requested to be addressed, prepaid, to the British and Foreign Bible Society, 116, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. 4. The Society's Depot is open from 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., the Offices from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays the Depot and the Offices close at 12.30 p.m. The Bible House is closed on the usual public holidays.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

I bequeath the sum of _____ *Pounds sterling*
free of Legacy Duty to "THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE
SOCIETY," instituted in London in the year 1804, to be paid for
the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time
being thereof, whose Receipt shall be a good discharge for the
same.

HOME TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: *Testaments Cent London.*

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The BISHOP of LIVERPOOL.
Rev. F. W. MACDONALD. | |
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| 1902. BISHOP COLENTON, D.D.
BISHOP FYNON, D.D.
Rev. W. T. DAVISON, D.D. | |
| 1903. The DEAN of WELLS. | |
| 1904. BISHOP GORE, D.D.
BISHOP KNON, D.D.
BISHOP OMBURY, D.D.
BISHOP STURLING, D.D.
Rev. MARSHALL HARTLEY.
Rev. F. B. MEYER, D.D.
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Mr. N. W. HOYLES, K.C., LL.D.
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The EARL of HARTHOUTH. | |
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C.B.
Mr. D. E. HOSTE. | |
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Mr. I. P. WERNER | |
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Mr. J. REDEL HARRIS, D.Litt.
Mr. A. J. CROSFIELD. | |
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Rev. W. W. JACKSON, D.D.
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Rev. J. H. SHAKESPEARE, D.D.
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| 1911. The BISHOP of WINCHESTER.
The BISHOP of MADRAS.
Sir THOMAS BARLOW, Bart., M.D.
Rev. DAVID BROOK, D.C.L.
Rev. J. SCOTT LIDGETT, D.D.
Mr. A. W. YOUNG. | |
| 1912. The BISHOP of NORWICH.
Sir HENRY E. K. PROCTER.
The BISHOP of CHESTER.
Rev. CHARLES BROWN, D.D.
Rev. Sir WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL,
LL.D., C.H. | |
| 1913. The BISHOP of OXFORD.
Rev. F. LUKE WISEMAN.
Rev. Prof. A. S. GEDEN, D.D.
Sir ANDREW WINGATE, K.C.I.E.
Mr. T. CHENEY GARFITT.
Mr. ALFRED BRAUEN. | |
| 1914. BISHOP DRURY, D.D.
Sir FREDERIC G. KENYON, K.C.B., F.R.S. | |

^a Deceased since March 31st, 1923.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Treasurer :

Mr. WILLIAMSON LAMPLOUGH.

Chairman of Committee :

SIR CHARLES J. OWENS, C.B.

Committee :

Elected May 2nd, 1923.

The dates indicate when members first joined the Committee.

Captain O. P. Beaman	1923	Lieut.-Col. G. Mackinlay	1913
Mr. D. L. von Braun	1918	Mr. Arthur Mercer	1917
Mr. W. van O. Bruyn	1906	Mr. E. R. P. Moon	1916
Sir James Carmichael, K.B.E.	1923	Mr. Arthur Newton	1922
Sir John G. Cumming, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.	1921	Mr. A. W. Oke	1910
Mr. W. J. Davey	1923	Mr. B. R. Parkinson	1916
Mr. James Dewar	1921	Mr. Harold W. Payne	1921
Mr. J. Morewood Dowsett	1923	Major H. Pelham-Burn	1917
Mr. C. A. Flint	1901	Mr. W. H. Poole	1908
Mr. Alexander Glegg	1919	Major-General Sir G. K. Scott-Moncrieff, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.	1918
Mr. Ernest Gripper	1918	Dr. R. T. Smith	1914
Mr. Melville J. Hardcastle	1919	Mr. R. K. Sorabji	1923
Mr. W. van Hasselt	1920	Mr. James Steel	1915
Major-Gen. E. Owen Hay, C.B.	1914	Mr. Charles F. Sutton	1911
Mr. E. G. Highton	1920	Mr. H. M. Veitch	1923
The Rt. Hon. Sir J. N. Jordan, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.	1922	Mr. Axel Welin	1907
Mr. H. Lance-Gray	1906	Mr. George Wilson	1920
		Mr. Henry Winteler	1923
		Mr. Enos Young	1919

The Committee meet at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., as a rule, on the first and third Mondays in every Month, at Half-past Eleven o'clock; and oftener, as business may require.

Secretaries :

Rev. JOHN H. RITSON, M.A., D.D., 1899	Rev. C. H. K. BOUGHTON, M.A., B.D., 1922
<i>Translating & Editorial Department.</i>	Rev. R. KILGOUR, D.D., <i>Editorial Superintendent.</i> 1909
<i>Literary Department.</i>	* Rev. EDWIN W. SMITH, <i>Literary Superintendent</i> 1923
<i>Home Department.</i>	Rev. A. D. HENWOOD, M.A., <i>Home Superintendent</i> 1921
<i>Publishing Department.</i>	Miss EDMUNDS, <i>Assistant</i> 1909
	Mr. GEORGE COWAN, <i>Publishing Superintendent</i> 1912

Accountant :

Mr. A. BUCHANAN 1911

Collector :

Mr. GEO. B. POOLE 1883

Auditors : MESSRS. J. AND A. W. SULLY & CO.

*Honorary Solicitors :

MESSRS. COWARD & HAWKSLEY, SONS & CHANGE, 30, Mincing Lane, E.C.

Bankers :

THE BANK OF ENGLAND, Threadneedle Street, E.C., and
WILLIAMS DEACON'S BANK, Ltd., 20, Birchin Lane, E.C.

The dates indicate the year of appointment.

* *Secretary of Italy from 1916; for Western Europe from 1921.*

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Representatives Abroad.

- *Rev. W. H. RAINEY, B.A., F.R.G.S., 58, *Rue de Clichy, Paris*.
Secretary for Western Europe. 1923.
Monsieur A. L. VASSEUR, 58, *Rue de Clichy, Paris*, Superin-
tendent for France and Belgium.
Rev. Dr. ENRICO PONS, 25, *Foro Italico, Rome*, Superintendent
for Italy.
Señor A. ARAUJO, 2 y 4, *Flor Alta, Madrid*, Superintendent
for Spain.
Mr. R. MORETON, *Praça de Luiz de Camões 20, Lisbon*,
Superintendent for Portugal.
- †Mr. A. L. HAIG, Secretary for Central Europe. 1923.
Herr A. HARTKOPF, 31, *Bernburger Strasse, Berlin*, Superin-
tendent for Germany and Austria.
Mr. F. THOMASKO, 4, *Deák tér, Budapest*, Superintendent for
Hungary.
Mr. ALEXANDER ENHOLD, *Hortensia 3, Warsaw*, Superin-
tendent for Poland.
Colporteur J. SPAČEK, *Soukenická ul. No. 15, Prague II,*
Czecho-Slovakia.
- Mr. J. W. WILES, M.A., 25, *Pop Lukina ulica, Belgrade*, Secretary
for South-East Europe. 1920.
Mr. VELIMIR JEREMITCH, 25, *Pop Lukina ulica, Belgrade*,
Depositary for Yugo-Slavia.
Mr. J. KLEIN, *Strada Robert de Flers, fosta Surorilor No. 18,*
Bucharest, Superintendent for Rumania.
Rev. IVAN GANTCHEFF, *ulica "6 September," No. 13, Varna*,
Superintendent for Bulgaria.
Mr. W. J. WISEMAN, Assistant Secretary, 10, *Tunnel Passage,*
Pera, Constantinople. 1923.
Mr. P. J. SIRINIDES, 2, *Philhellene Street, Athens*, Superin-
tendent for Greece.
Mr. ATHANASE SINAS, *Korytza, Depositary for Albania.*
- Mr. WALTER DAVIDSON, *Johannesvägen 6, Helsingfors, Finland*,
Secretary for North-East Europe. 1893.
Mr. E. HACKMAN, Depositary, *B.F.B.S., 6 Sjomansgatan,*
Helsingfors.
Colporteur J. AUNWERDT, *Dorpat, Estonia.*
Mr. M. NEEDRE, Depositary, *Riga, Latvia.*
Colporteur A. NEYMANN, Depositary, 12, *Ekatzerinhof Prospect,*
Petrograd.
Mr. K. I. BJELOUSOFF, *Vladivostok.*
- Mr. C. T. HOOPER, *Bible House, Port Said*, Secretary for Egypt. 1909.
Mr. ATHANASIAN, Sub-agent.
Mr. W. H. CUMMUN, Sub-agent, *Alexandria.*
Mr. A. O. NEVE, Depositary, *Bible House, Jerusalem.*
Mr. T. P. BEVAN, Sub-agent, *Addis Abbaba, Abyssinia.*

* Secretary for Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador from 1916.

† Assistant Secretary for South-Eastern Europe from 1920.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Representatives Abroad (*continued*).

- Mr. W. J. W. ROOME, *B.F.B.S.*, *Mombasa*, Secretary for East Central Africa. 1916.
- Mr. R. G. STEVEN, *Rue de Fez, Tangier*, Secretary for North Africa. 1919.
- Monsieur CHAS. BONNET, 43, *Rue d'Isly, Algiers*, Superintendent for Algeria.
- Rev. A. W. BANFIELD, *P.O. Box 78, Lagos*, Secretary for West Africa. 1915.
- Rev. H. P. M. STEIN, *P.O. Box 215, Cape Town*, Secretary for the Cape Province. 1922.
- Mr. W. WATTS, Assistant at Cape Town.
- Rev. GEORGE LOWE, *P.O. Box 639, Johannesburg*, Secretary for Central South Africa and Natal. 1903.
- Mr. H. L. POTGIETER, Assistant at Johannesburg.
- Mr. A. L. HOPE, *B.F.B.S.*, *Julfa, Isfahan*, Secretary for Persia. 1913.
- Mr. GEORGE MACGEORGE, *Julfa, Isfahan*, Sub-agent for Persia.
- Rev. A. W. YOUNG, 23, *Chowringhee Road, Calcutta*, Secretary at Calcutta. 1901.
- Mr. R. A. ADAMS, 170, *Hornby Road, Bombay*, Secretary at Bombay. 1907.
- Rev. W. E. H. ORGANE, B.A., B.D., *P.O. Box 502, Madras*, Secretary at Madras. 1905.
- Rev. A. R. FULLER, *St. Mark's Road, Bangalore*, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer at Bangalore. 1922.
- Mr. W. H. L. CHURCH, *Bible Depot, Anarkali Street, Lahore*, Secretary for the Panjab, and for North India (*pro tem.*) 1902.
- Rev. W. SHERRATT, 19, *Sule Pagoda Road, Rangoon*, Secretary for Burma. 1898.
- *Mr. T. GRACE, *Bible House, Union Place, Colombo*, Secretary for Ceylon. 1908.
- Mr. B. PURDY, 17-2 *Armenian Street, Singapore*, Secretary for Malaya. 1921.
- Mr. P. PENNINGA, *Bandoeng, Java*, Sub-agent.
- Rev. W. H. WILLIAMS, *Bible House, Kuala Lumpur, Federated Malay States*, Sub-agent.
- Rev. G. H. BONFIELD, D.D., 3, *Hongkong Road, Shanghai*, Secretary for China (retiring). 1893.
- Rev. C. W. SHEPPARD, 3, *Hongkong Road, Shanghai*, Secretary for China. 1923.
- Mr. U. BRINER, Assistant at Shanghai.
- Rev. TILDEN ELDRIDGE, Assistant at Shanghai.
- Mr. G. A. ANDERSON, *Mukden*, Sub-agent for Manchuria.
- Mr. A. F. ALMBLAD, *Kalgan*, Sub-agent for Mongolia.
- Mr. J. J. TOOP, *Tientsin*, Sub-agent for Chihli, etc.
- Rgv. A. H. FISHER, *Tsinanfu*, Sub-agent for Shantung.

* Secretary of Colombo Auxiliary from 1895.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Representatives Abroad (*continued*).

- Mr. G. M. FRANCK, *Chengtu*, Sub-agent for Szechwan, etc.
 Rev. R. J. GOULD, *Hankow*, Sub-agent for Central China.
 Rev. H. O. T. BURKWALL, *Canton*, Sub-agent for Kwangsi and N. and E. Kwangtung.
 Mr. F. PARROTT, 95, *Yedo Machi, Kobe*, Secretary for Japan. 1899.
 Mr. HUGH MILLER, *B.F.B.S., Chongno, Seoul*, Secretary for Korea. 1905.
 Mr. THOMAS HORBS, Assistant.
 Mr. CHAS. E. BOWEN, *Bible House, 242, Pitt Street, Sydney*, Secretary for New South Wales. 1903.
 Mr. ERNEST J. GOSBELL, *Bible House, 241-243, Flinders Lane Melbourne*, Secretary for Victoria. 1922.
 Rev. G. M. CLARK, *Bible House, 108, George Street, Brisbane*, Secretary for Queensland. 1906.
 Rev. J. H. SEXTON, *Bible House, Grenfell Street, Adelaide*, Secretary for South Australia. 1907.
 Rev. A. S. J. FRY, *B.F.B.S., 167, St. George's Terrace, Perth*, Secretary for Western Australia. 1911.
 Rev. A. S. BRYANT, 87, *St. John's Street, Launceston*, Organizing Secretary for Tasmania. 1920.
 Rev. A. T. THOMPSON, M.A., B.D., *P.O. Box 930, Wellington*, Secretary for New Zealand. 1918.
 *Mr. W. C. K. TORRE, *Casilla del Correo, 5, Buenos Aires*, Secretary for Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. 1917.
 Rev. A. TELFORD, *Caixa 73, Rio de Janeiro*, Secretary for Brazil. 1917.
 †Rev. W. J. MOWLL, *Apartado de Correo, 157, Carácas*, Secretary for the West Indies Agency. 1923.
 Mr. A. R. STARK, *Casilla 568, Valparaiso*, Secretary for Chile and Bolivia. 1901.
 Mr. D. BRACKENRIDGE, *Casilla 58, Callao*, Secretary for Peru, Ecuador and Colombia (West). 1923.
 Rev. W. B. COOPER, M.A., D.D., 16, *College Street, Toronto*, Secretary for Canada. 1907.

The following District Secretaries are on the Staff of the Canadian Bible Society :

- Rev. W. E. Hassard, B.A., B.D., Toronto.
 Rev. R. J. Bowen, F.R.G.S., London.
 Rev. E. Salter, Winnipeg.
 Rev. J. Knox Wright, D.D., Vancouver.
 Rev. H. D. Marr, B.A., Calgary.
 Rev. W. F. Crawford, B.A., B.D., Ottawa.
 Rev. G. A. MacLennan, B.A., Montreal.
 Rev. F. S. Porter, M.A., B.D., St. John.
 Rev. C. W. McKim, M.A., Edmonton.
 Rev. J. B. Taylor, Saskatoon.
 Rev. J. Reid, Regina.

* Deceased, August, 1923.

† Relief Secretary in India from 1913.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Home District Secretaries.

	<i>Appointed.</i>
Rev. W. R. Bowman, B.A., <i>Rowley Avenue, Stafford</i>	1897.
Rev. W. G. Jones, B.A., 36, <i>Abinger Road, Bedford Park, London</i>	1897.
Rev. J. Alston, M.A., 9, <i>Priory Road, Kew, Surrey</i>	1901.
Rev. T. Smetham, 53, <i>St. Augustine's Avenue, Croydon</i>	1902.
Rev. Walter Wall, 12, <i>Chestnut Road, Moseley, Birmingham</i>	1905.
Rev. T. A. Wolfendale, M.A., 2, <i>Grove Bank, Duffield Road, Derby</i>	1905.
Rev. J. Addison Ingle, M.A., <i>Lanteglos, Wilderness Road, Plymouth</i>	1905.
Rev. H. K. Marsden, M.A., 4, <i>Ashwood Terrace, Headingley, Leeds</i>	1909.
Rev. H. J. Cossar, M.A., <i>St. Luke's Lodge, Alpha Road, Cambridge</i>	1910.
Rev. George Daunt, M.A., 8, <i>Claremont Crescent, Weston-super-Mare</i>	1911.
Rev. George Hanson, 66, <i>Maple Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne</i>	1913.
Rev. W. G. Roberts, M.A., <i>Wootton Hoo, Wootton, Bedford</i>	1913.
Rev. E. W. G. Hudgell, M.A., 10, <i>Talbot Road, Highgate, N. 6</i>	1914.
Rev. A. Wellesley Jones, B.A., B.D., <i>Leven Grove, Kilmorey Park, Chester</i>	1914.
Rev. W. Crwys Williams, 1, <i>Richmond Villas, Swansea</i>	1915.
Rev. J. Crossley, 18, <i>Grosvenor Road, Scarborough</i>	1915.
Rev. Tom Dring, <i>Montclair Drive, Mossley Hill, Liverpool</i>	1915.
Rev. A. W. M. Cassan, M.A., M.C., 442, <i>Unthank Road, Norwich</i>	1920.
Rev. W. A. Ferris, M.A., 31, <i>Albert Road, Caversham, Reading</i>	1920.
Rev. A. G. Williamson, M.A., 7, <i>Ravine Avenue, Moston, Manchester</i>	1922.
Rev. P. Austin, B.A., <i>Woodcroft, Fernleigh Road, Grange-over-Sands</i>	1922.
Rev. W. H. Wicks, <i>Hutton, Preston</i>	1923.
*Rev. Emrys Rees, B.A., 6, <i>Llandough Street, Cathay, Cardiff</i>	1923.

Appointed as from September 1, 1923.

SUMMARY

WHEN the actual condition of many countries is considered, it is a matter for wonder and devout thanksgiving that the issues now to be reported, namely 8,679,384, are only 279,000 less than those of 1913. This year the Society has issued 139,625 more Bibles and 181,853 more Testaments than in 1921. The total was made up of 886,318 Bibles, 1,065,966 New Testaments, and 6,727,100 smaller portions containing not less than one complete book of Scripture.

Since its foundation in 1804 the Bible Society has issued over 336,000,000 copies of the Scriptures. Of these, more than 101,100,000 have been in English.

Translation and Revision.

The Bible Society has but one object—to provide God's Word for every man in his own tongue. The languages in which it has helped to publish or circulate the Scriptures now number 558. EIGHT of these (the names of which will be found on pp. 16-18) have been added since our last Report. This figure includes the complete Bible in 136 languages, and the New Testament in 130 more. Since the beginning of this century no fewer than 180 forms of speech have been added to the list.

The Partner of Missions.

The foreign missions of almost every Reformed Church draw their supplies of the Scriptures from the Society. It prints the editions which the missionaries need; it sends them out to remote stations; and it does this on such terms that, as a rule, no part of the cost falls on the exchequer of the Mission, which receives and distributes the books.

The Anglican Communion throughout the world is teaching to-day in about 200 separate languages and dialects. Versions in no fewer than 185 of these are obtained by Anglican Missions from the Bible Society. Thus the S.P.G. has procured 83 versions, and the C.M.S. has used 127 versions. In proportion, equally important help is rendered to the U.M.C.A., the

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Melanesian Mission, the S.A.M.S., and the Anglican Mission in New Guinea.

The Foreign Missions of the Free Churches obtain from the Bible Society the bulk of all the versions they need. It furnishes the London Missionary Society with 60 versions, and Methodist Missionary Societies with 107. Presbyterian Missions throughout the world use 153 of its versions. It published the Kongo Testament for the Baptist Missionary Society, and supplies many Baptist stations in China, Burma, Africa, and the West Indies. The China Inland Mission and other interdenominational societies obtain from the Bible House practically all the editions of the Scriptures which they use.

The Society does not limit its help to British missionary societies. It also supplies numerous foreign mission stations belonging to the Reformed Churches of Finland and Sweden and Norway and Denmark, of Holland and France and Germany and Switzerland, and of the United States.

More than 900 native Christian colporteurs were at work week by week throughout the year 1922, supervised by the Society's foreign officials or its missionary friends. In spite of many hindrances these colporteurs sold last year not far short of five million copies of the Scriptures.

The Work at Home.

The Society's editions are produced under conditions of labour which are scrupulously guarded by the Committee. The heavy loss entailed by the publication of our popular English editions of the Bible and Testament at such low prices is borne by the Society's funds, and forms one important contribution by the Bible Society to the cause of home missions.

Apart from the losses involved in the sales of its books at catalogue prices, the Society spent some thousands of pounds in England and Wales last year, mainly in special grants of the Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the schools and home missions of nearly every Christian Communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

In order to assist and increase the circulation of the Bible in our own country, especially in places which are not reached by ordinary booksellers, the Committee grant special colportage terms to all societies and institutions which regularly carry on the sale of the Scriptures by colportage among the poor in England and Wales.

SUMMARY

Nearly all the English and Welsh Institutions for befriending the blind obtain the Scriptures which they require from the Bible House at merely nominal rates. Each volume of the Society's new English Braille Bible now costs from 5s. to 6s. 8d. to produce, and is priced at 1s. 6d. Towards the cost of these books the Society now receives a Government grant of 2s. 6d. per volume: the net loss to the Society, therefore, ranges from 1s. to 2s. 8d. per volume. In English or Welsh 1,945 volumes in embossed type were granted free, or sold, during 1922-23. Any poor blind applicant can obtain a book of the English Bible in Braille type as a free gift, on the recommendation of some minister of religion or Auxiliary officer.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges received last year as gifts 235 Old Testaments in Hebrew, and 374 New Testaments in Greek.

Auxiliaries.

At the end of March, 1923, the Society had 5,094 Auxiliaries, Branches, and Associations in England and Wales. In connexion with these, during the previous twelve months, 3,992 meetings were held, and 4,282 sermons preached, on behalf of the Society.

Outside the United Kingdom the Society has about 5,000 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Dominions and Colonies. Many of these carry on vigorous Bible distribution in their own localities, besides sending generous contributions to London.

Finance.

Expenditure.

On translating, revising, printing, binding and transporting the Scriptures the Society expended £201,966, which is £11,804 less than in 1921-22. Distribution and administration at home and abroad cost £158,815—a decrease of £9,680. Thus the total expenditure was reduced by £21,484.

Receipts.

The year closes with a surplus of £6,131. For this result we give thanks to God. Through all the years of its existence the Society's trust in His providence has been vindicated.

The total income of the Society during the twelve months ending March 31st, 1923, amounted to £366,912, which is £27,318 less than in the previous year. The receipts from sales were

THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS

£141,896—a decrease of £3,736. Donations paid in London were £26,462, which is £19,500 less than in 1922. From legacies the Society received £79,283; this is £24,200 above the recent annual average.* Following the usual practice this surplus has been carried to the Legacy Equalization Fund and £55,083 taken into the income for the year.

Contributions from Auxiliaries.

The contributions from Auxiliaries at home and abroad amounted to £130,275; this is £15,899 less than in 1921-22. In England the Auxiliaries paid in £71,419 (a decrease of £8,648), and in Wales £8,784 (an increase of £987). The Hibernian Bible Society sent £1,531, and a legacy of £8,833. From the continent of Europe we received £855; from South Africa, £4,802 (an increase of £209). India and Ceylon raised £5,213; China, £1,630; Japan and Korea, £314. The Auxiliaries in Australia raised £18,392 (an increase of £3,687), and in New Zealand, £4,820 (an increase of £116). From South America we received £917. The Canadian Bible Society raised altogether over £75,000, and after defraying the cost of Bible work in the Dominion remitted £9,912 to London.

Obituary.

Since the Society's annual meeting in 1922, death has removed no fewer than eight of its Vice-Presidents:—

Lord Kinnaird, K.T.; Bishop Kennion, D.D.; Canon R. B. Girdlestone; Sir G. E. Knox; Mr. George Cadbury; Mr. E. J. Farp; Sir W. P. Hartley; Mr. John Chown.

The Staff.

The Rev. C. H. K. Boughton, M.A., B.D., formerly Vicar of Calverley, Leeds, and Hon. Canon of Bradford, has been appointed as one of the Society's two principal secretaries, to fill the post left vacant in 1922 by the resignation of the Rev. S. Nowell-Roston, M.A.

The Rev. T. H. Darlow, M.A., after serving for a quarter of a century as the Society's Literary Superintendent, retired at Easter, 1923, and the Rev. E. W. Smith, secretary for Western Europe, has taken his place.

The Rev. W. H. Rainey, B.A., F.R.G.S., who has done valuable service as the Society's secretary for Venezuela, Colombia,

SUMMARY

and Ecuador, has been appointed to succeed the Rev. E. W. Smith in Western Europe.

The Rev. G. W. Sheppard, formerly of the United Methodist Mission at Ningpo, has now entered upon his important new duties at Shanghai as the Society's secretary for China, in succession to the Rev. Dr. G. H. Bondfield, who is remaining at Shanghai for some months to initiate Mr. Sheppard into the work.

Mr. D. Brackenridge, who served the Society as sub-agent for Peru, has been now appointed secretary of a new agency to comprise Peru, Ecuador, and part of Colombia.

The Rev. W. J. Mowll, who since 1913 has acted as relief secretary in India, has been appointed to take charge of an agency which will include Venezuela, part of Colombia, British Honduras, the Guianas, and the West Indian Islands, and will be known as the West Indies Agency.

The Rev. R. B. Seecombe, M.A., who joined the Society's staff of District Secretaries in 1920, has now accepted the living of St. Athanasius, Kirkdale, Liverpool.

The Rev. Percy Austin, B.A., who entered the ministry of the Baptist Church in 1914, has been given charge of the North-Western district.

The Rev. W. H. Wicks, a Congregational minister, has been appointed as District Secretary for a new Central-Lancashire district.

As an additional District Secretary to take charge of the counties of Glamorgan East, Brecon, Radnor, and Monmouth, and to help to promote generally the interests of the Society in the Welsh Church, the Committee has appointed the Rev. Emrys Rees, B.A., who preaches and speaks with equal fluency in English and Welsh.

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THE BIBLE SOCIETY RECEIVED FOR ITS GENERAL FUND DURING THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31st, 1923:

From sales of the Scriptures issued from the Bible House, London, to trade depots, Auxiliaries, missionary societies, etc. ...	£68,430
From sales of the Scriptures abroad	71,278
	<hr/> £139,708
From sales of magazines	2,188
Subscriptions, donations, etc., paid at the Bible House, London	29,642
Contributed by Auxiliaries at home	82,106
Contributed abroad	48,169
Legacies	79,282
Transferred to the Legacy Equalization Fund	24,199
	<hr/> 55,083
Dividends	10,016
	<hr/>
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£366,912
	<hr/>

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THE BIBLE SOCIETY EXPENDED FROM ITS GENERAL FUND DURING THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31st, 1923 :

Translating, revising, printing, and binding the Scriptures	£186,671	
Freight and carriage of the Scriptures ...	15,295	
	-----	£201,966
Warehouses, depots, and sub-depots at home and abroad		37,946
Maintaining colporteurs and Biblewomen		41,928
Salaries and travelling expenses of Secretaries and Sub-agents abroad		34,448
Bible House administration, salaries, repairs, rates, taxes, insurance, postage, interest, etc.		14,106
Home Organization staff, including District Secre- taries and Publicity expenses		20,403
Reports, magazines, and other literature... ..		8,053
Allowances to old and disabled servants		1,931

TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£380,781

The above statement is a summary of the Cash Account (published in detail in the Annual Report), which has been audited by Messrs. J. and A. W. Sully & Co., Chartered Accountants.

The Society's Annual Report for 1922-1923

Paper cover, to non-subscribers, 1s.

The Bridge-Builders

The Society's Popular Illustrated Report for 1922-23. Price 6d.; post free, 8d.

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A Monthly Magazine of the Bible Society. Profusely Illustrated, 1d. Annual volumes, cloth, 2s.

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A Monthly Magazine for young people. Illustrated, ½d. Annual volumes, cloth, gilt edges, 2s. each.

The History of the British and Foreign Bible Society

By WILLIAM CANTON. With Portraits and Illustrations. Five volumes, £2 2s. *net*. Published by Mr. John Murray, Albemarle Street, London.

Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society

Published by direction of the Committee. Edited by T. H. DARLOW. Hodder & Stoughton, London, New York, and Toronto. Price 7s. 6d. post free. A few copies still unsold.

Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society

Compiled by T. H. DARLOW, M.A., and H. F. MOULE, M.A. In two vols., 8vo., large paper, bound in dark blue buckram, top edges gilt. Vol. I., English, published in 1903. Vol. II., Other Languages (1,850 pp., bound in three parts), published in 1911. Only 500 sets printed, of which 450, numbered and signed, were for sale in England and America. The subscription price of the last 200 sets has been raised to £3 3s. *net* for the complete work (volumes not sold separately). To be obtained at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

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